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THE BOOK OF ROBERT BURNS

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THE BOOK OF ROBERT BURNS

GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL MEMOIRS OF
THE POET HIS ASSOCIATES AND THOSE CELEBRATED
IN HIS WRITINGS

BY THE

REV. CHARLES ROGERS, D.D., LL.D.

FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND, OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF NORTHERN
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SOCIETY OF RUSSIA; AND CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE HISTORICAL
AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ENGLAND, OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF BERLIN, AND OF THE
ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA.

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Oh, like a glorious bird of God, he leapt up from the earth,
A lark in Song's exalted heaven, a robin by the hearth !
Oh, like a peerless flower he sprang from Nature's meanest sod,
Yet shedding joy on every path by human footstep trod !
How shall we tell his wondrous power, how shall we say or sing
What magic to a million hearts his deathless strains can bring !
How men on murkiest battlefields have felt the potent charm,
Till sinking valour leapt to life, and strung the nerveless arm !

JAMES MACFARLAN.

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THE BOOK OF ROBERT BURNS.

REV. GEORGE LAWRIE, D.D.

THE name Lawrie, otherwise Lowry and Laurie, is common to several parts of Scotland, but the chief sept bearing the designation is connected with Dumfriesshire. From Stephen Laurie, a merchant in Dumfries, who flourished in the reign of James VI., descended Sir Robert Laurie of Maxwelton, whose daughter Anna (familiarily Annie), born in 1682, is the heroine of a popular song.¹

Springing from the Dumfriesshire sept, the Rev. John Lawrie ministered some time at Macosquin, in Ireland, and was from thence, in 1689, called to the parish of Penpont. Translated to Auchinleck in 1692, he there discharged the pastoral duties till his death in 1704. His son James, licensed to preach in 1709, was, on the 8th May 1711, ordained minister of Kirkmichael, in the county of Ayr. He died on the 7th August 1764, having fulfilled a ministry of fifty-four years. By his wife, Ann Ord (married 11th September 1714, died 28th December 1747), he had three sons and a daughter, Helen.² The youngest son, George, became the Poet's friend.

George Lawrie was born at the manse of Kirkmichael on the 21st September 1727.³ Educated at the University, and licensed

¹ M'Dowall's *History of Dumfries*, 244, 245.

² *Fasti Eccl. Scot.*, i. 669; ii. 96, 119.

³ Kirkmichael Parish Register.

by the Presbytery of Edinburgh, he was, on the 28th September 1763, ordained minister of Loudoun or Newmills, Ayrshire. On the invitation of Mr. Gavin Hamilton, he became a subscriber for several copies of Burns's Kilmarnock edition, and when the work reached him, he read its contents with surprise and admiration. Being on terms of friendship with Dr. Blacklock, he sent to the Doctor one of the copies, and begged that, in the event of his entertaining the same high opinion of the poetry that he had done personally, he would bring the author under the notice of Dr. Blair. Meanwhile Mr. Lawrie invited the Poet to his manse, and the invitation was readily accepted.

Burns made his visit on one of the early days of September 1786. The manse of Loudoun rests beautifully on St. Margaret's Hill, near the Irvine water; and the sweetness of the scene, which the Poet remarked on his approaching it, had an appropriate sequel in the cordiality of his reception. Mr. Lawrie's family consisted of his wife, a mild, estimable woman of considerable literary culture, a son rising into manhood, and four beautiful daughters, the two eldest, who were twins, being in their twentieth year, and the youngest, Louisa, seventeen. One of the young ladies played upon the spinet, and the visitor gallantly remarked to her that she knew how to enchant a poet. In the evening there was a dance, in which the Poet joined. Large-limbed as he was, he danced with grace, and it was remarked by Miss Louisa that he "kept time admirably." At this period Burns was under deep dejection, and the kindness extended to him by a generous and sympathizing household affected him powerfully. In the manse he remained during the night, and, as he did not appear at the breakfast-hour, Mr. Archibald Lawrie, his entertainer's son, was sent to awaken him. But he met the Poet on the stair, who, in response to an inquiry as to how he had slept, said he had been praying half the night. "My prayers," he added, "you will find

upon the dressing-table." There, after his departure, Mr. Lawrie's family took up a scrap of paper bearing these lines :—

O Thou dread Power, who reign'st above !
I know Thou wilt me hear,
When for this scene of peace and love
I make my prayer sincere.

The hoary sire—the mortal stroke,
Long, long be pleas'd to spare ;
To bless his little filial flock,
And show what good men are.

She, who her lovely offspring eyes
With tender hopes and fears,
Oh, bless her with a mother's joys,
But spare a mother's tears !

Their hope, their stay, their darling youth,
In manhood's dawning blush !
Bless him, Thou God of love and truth,
Up to a parent's wish.

The beauteous, seraph sister-band—
With earnest tears I pray,
Thou know'st the snares on ev'ry hand,
Guide Thou their steps away.

When, soon or late, they reach that coast,
O'er life's rough ocean driven,
May they rejoice, no wand'rer lost,
A family in heaven !

From the manse windows could be observed the old castle of New-mills, with a range of hills rising towards the south. In allusion to these objects, and to the festivities in which he had so agreeably

shared, the Poet inscribed on a scrap of paper, which he handed to Miss Louisa, these two verses :—

The night was still, and o'er the hill
 The moon shone on the castle wa' ;
 The mavis sang, while dew-drops hang
 Around her on the castle wa'.

Sae merrily they danced the ring,
 Frae e'enin' till the cock did crow ;
 And aye the o'erword o' the spring,
 Was, Irvine's bairns are bonnie a'.

Leaving his kind host and his amiable household, which he did late in the afternoon, Burns pursued his journey homeward, across the moor of Galston, when the prospect of finally parting with friends whose worth he estimated, and from scenes associated with tender memories, awakened his plaintive Muse. During his journey he composed what he considered would be “the last song he should ever measure in Caledonia,” commencing “The gloomy night is gathering fast.”

Post nubila Phæbus. A few days after his return to Mossiel, the Poet had placed in his hands by Gavin Hamilton a letter which Mr. Lawrie had received from Dr. Blacklock. In this communication, dated Edinburgh, September 4th, the blind poet thanks his correspondent for giving him what he describes as “an opportunity of sharing one of the finest, and perhaps one of the most genuine, entertainments of which the human mind is susceptible.” He proceeds :—

Many instances have I seen of Nature's force and beneficence exerted under numerous and formidable disadvantages ; but none equal to that with which you have been kind enough to present me. There is a pathos and delicacy in his serious poems, a vein of wit and humour in those of a more festive turn,

which cannot be too much admired nor too warmly approved; and I think I shall never open the book without feeling my astonishment renewed and increased.

In conclusion, Dr. Blacklock promises to bring the volume under the notice of Dr. Blair, and strongly recommends that a new edition should be published. The letter inspired the desponding Poet with fresh hope.

Having abandoned his purpose of proceeding to Jamaica, the Poet, early in November, paid a second visit to St. Margaret's Hill. As in course of conversation the prevailing rumour respecting Miss Peggy Kennedy was alluded to, the Poet somewhat bluntly expressed a view unfavourable to the lady, an act of inconsiderateness which drew forth a sharp rebuke from Mrs. Lawrie. He had brought for Miss Louisa's perusal the first and second volumes of a collection of songs, and he promised to send by the carrier the third and concluding volume, also a copy of Ossian. On the 13th November, he fulfilled his promise, accompanying the books with a letter to young Mr. Archibald. In this, after expressing his compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Lawrie, and warmest wishes for the young ladies, "particularly the fair musician," he concludes:—

Indeed it needs not the feelings of a poet to be interested in the welfare of one of the sweetest scenes of domestic peace and kindred love that ever I saw; as I think the peaceful unity of St. Margaret's Hill can only be excelled by the harmonious concord of the Apocalyptic Zion.

When the package of books was opened up, there was found a slip of paper, containing the following mild expostulation with Mrs. Lawrie:—

Rusticity's ungainly form.
 May cloud the highest mind;
 But when the heart is nobly warm,
 The *good* excuse will find.

Propriety's cold cautious rules
 Warm fervour may o'erlook ;
 But spare poor sensibility
 Th' ungentle, harsh rebuke.

On the 27th November Dr. Blacklock addressed a second letter to Dr. Lawrie on the subject of the poems. A report had reached him that a second edition was projected, according to some, of twelve, and according to others, of five thousand copies, at the expense of the gentlemen of Ayrshire. The Doctor had also been informed that his former letter to his correspondent, in commendation of the compositions, was to be prefixed to the new volume, and he expressed a wish—while he had nothing to retract as to his favourable estimate of the poetry—that if the letter was really to be printed, his correspondent would “erase or correct anything which may appear to be careless, bombastic, or hyperbolical.” On the day following the date of this letter, and without any knowledge of it, the Poet arrived in Edinburgh. From some cause, which is not quite obvious, he delayed to pay his respects to Dr. Blacklock ; hence, in a third letter from the Doctor to his reverend correspondent at Newmills, written about the 11th or 12th of December, he remarks :—

By the bye, I hear that Mr. Burns is, and has been some time, in Edinburgh. These news I am sorry to have had at second hand ; they would have come much more welcome from the Bard's own mouth. I have, however, written to Mr. Mackenzie, the *Man of Feeling*, to beg the favour that he would bring us together.

On the 22nd of December Dr. Lawrie communicated with the Poet at Edinburgh as to Dr. Blacklock's desire to form his personal acquaintance ; he added :—

I rejoice to hear from all corners of your rising fame, and I wish and expect it may tower still higher by the new publication. But as a friend I warn you

to prepare to meet with your share of detraction and envy—a train that may always accompany great men. For your comfort I am in great hopes that the number of your friends and admirers will increase, and that you have some chance of Ministerial or even Royal patronage. Now, my friend, such rapid success is very uncommon; and do you think yourself in no danger of suffering by applause and a full purse? Remember Solomon's advice, when he spoke from experience, "Stronger is he that conquers his own spirit," etc. I hope you will not imagine I speak from suspicion or evil report. I assure you I speak from love and good report, and good opinion, and a strong desire to see you shine in the sunshine as you have done in the shade—in the practice as you do in the theory of virtue. This is my prayer in return for your elegant composition in verse. All here join in compliments and good wishes for your further prosperity.

The Poet, owing to his numerous engagements, allowed Dr. Lawrie's letter to remain unanswered for several weeks. On the 5th of February 1787 he at length responded. After apologizing for the delay, he proceeds:—

I feel, and ever shall feel for you, the mingled sentiments of esteem for a friend and reverence for a father. I thank you, sir, with all my soul for your friendly hints, though I do not need them so much as my friends are apt to imagine. You are dazzled with newspaper accounts and distant reports; but in reality I have no great temptation to be intoxicated with the cup of prosperity. Novelty may attract the attention of mankind awhile; to it I owe my present *éclat*; but I see the time, not far distant, when the popular tide, which has borne me to a height of which I am, perhaps, unworthy, shall recede with silent celerity, and leave me a barren waste of sand, to descend at my leisure to my former station. I do not say this in the affectation of modesty; I see the consequence is unavoidable, and am prepared for it. I had been at a good deal of pains to form a just, impartial estimate of my intellectual powers before I came here. I have not added, since I came to Edinburgh, anything to the account; and I trust I shall take every atom of it back to my shades, the coverts of my unnoticed early years. In Dr. Blacklock, whom I see very often, I have found what I would have expected in our friend, a clear head and an excellent heart.

Though a pronounced adherent of the Moderate party in the

Church, Mr. Lawrie was held in general esteem by all sections of the community. An accomplished scholar, and of wide culture, he in 1791 received the degree of D.D. from the University of Glasgow. He died on the 17th October 1799, in his seventy-eighth year and the thirty-seventh of his ministry.¹

Dr. Lawrie married, in 1764, Mary, daughter of Professor Archibald Campbell of St. Andrews,² with issue two sons and four daughters. James, the elder son, baptized 6th October 1765, died in infancy. Of the daughters, Christina and Anna were twins, and were born on the 11th November 1766.³ Christina married Alexander Wilson, bookseller in Glasgow. Anna married, on the 14th February 1800, the Rev. George Gordon, minister of Sorn, with issue two sons, George Lawrie, major in the H.E.I.C.S., and Archibald Campbell; also a daughter, Louisa. Mrs. Gordon died on the 8th November 1834.⁴

Of the two younger daughters, Mary, a twin with her brother Archibald, was baptized on the 26th July 1768. Louisa, fourth and youngest daughter, was born on the 30th October 1769.⁵ In prosecuting the study of music, she proceeded to Edinburgh, where Burns occasionally met her at evening gatherings. Towards the close of his letter to her father of the 5th February 1787, he thus refers to her musical performances:—

By far the most agreeable hours I spend in Edinburgh must be placed to the account of Miss Lawrie and her pianoforte. I cannot help repeating to you and Mrs. Lawrie a compliment that Mr. Mackenzie, the celebrated *Man of Feeling*, paid to Miss Lawrie the other night at the concert. I had come in at the interlude, and sat down by him till I saw Miss Lawrie in a seat not very far distant, and went up to pay my respects to her. On my return to Mr. Mackenzie, he asked me who she was: I told him she was the daughter of a

¹ *Fasti Eccl. Scot.*, ii. 185.

² Mrs. Lawrie died at Glasgow on the 23rd January 1818, at the age of eighty-eight.

³ Loudoun Parish Register.

⁴ *Fasti Eccl. Scot.*, ii. 141.

⁵ Loudoun Parish Register.

reverend friend of mine in the west country. He returned, there was something very striking to his idea in her appearance. On my desiring to know what it was, he was pleased to say: "She has a great deal of the elegance of a well-bred lady about her, with all the sweet simplicity of a country girl."

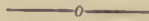
Archibald, younger and only surviving son of Dr. George Lawrie, was baptized on the 26th July 1768. With this young gentleman the Poet corresponded in November 1786, subsequent to his second visit to Newmills. From Edinburgh, on the 14th August 1787, he, on the eve of his setting out on his tour to the Highlands, addressed him in a brief letter, in which he alludes to his young friend making preparation for the ministerial office. Archibald was licensed to preach on the 18th January 1791, and, on the 1st August 1793, was ordained assistant and successor to his father. In 1816 he received the degree of D.D. from the University of Glasgow. He ministered at Loudoun till his death, which took place on the 5th May 1837, in the forty-fourth year of his ministry. He was twice married. By his first wife, Anne Adair, sister of Dr. James M'Kitterick Adair (who espoused the Poet's heroine, Charlotte Hamilton), he had four sons; also seven daughters, Anne Baxter, Mary Louisa, Christina Wilson, Barbara Adair, Louisa Campbell, Frances Wallace, and Henrietta Liston.

Christina Wilson, the third daughter, born 16th September 1799, married the Rev. Robert Balfour Graham, minister of Stenton, afterwards of North Berwick, with issue. Henrietta Liston, the youngest daughter, born 26th February 1809, married James Dalmahoy, surgeon in the H.E.I.C.S.

Of the four sons, George James, the eldest, was born on the 10th October 1797. In 1843 he was admitted minister of Monkton, Ayrshire, in succession to the Rev. Thomas Burns, the Poet's nephew, who joined the Free Church. He continued to minister at Monkton till 1877, when he resigned his charge, and took up his residence at

Hythe, in England. He died in 1878, in his eighty-second year. A man of considerable theological learning, he received the degree of D.D. Subsequent to his death was issued from his pen a small *brochure* entitled *Songs and Miscellaneous Pieces*. Two of his songs, "Lang, lang Syne," and "The Auld Manse," are widely popular.

James Adair, the second son, born 25th June 1801, became Professor of Surgery in the University of Glasgow. Francis Rawdon Hastings, the third son, was born on 10th August 1807, and Archibald, the fourth son, was born 8th September 1810. The first wife of Dr. Archibald Lawrie, Anne Adair, died 12th February 1822; he married, secondly, Mary Howison, who died 26th January 1863.



JESSIE LEWARS.

JOHN LEWARS, supervisor of Excise at Dumfries, died in that town on the 22nd April 1789, in the 69th year of his age.¹ He had a son John, and two daughters, Mary and Jessie.

John Lewars the younger became an officer of Excise, and had the distinction of giving official instructions to the Poet on his joining the service. Latterly he was one of the Bard's most cherished associates; he was a close attendant upon him in his last hours, and to Mr. James Burnes in Montrose conveyed the tidings of his death. Having attained the rank of supervisor, he retired from the revenue service in 1825. He some time rented the farm of Lauder in the parish of Carlaverock, but ultimately retired to

¹ Tombstone inscription in St. Michael's Churchyard, Dumfries.

Ryedalé Cottage, Troqueer, where he died in September 1826. In 1799 he married Barbara Howe, of the parish of Gretna, with issue a son, John, and a daughter, Bessie. John died abroad, unmarried. Bessie married, in 1827, William Montgomery, who rented the farm of Hermitage in the parish of Urr, Kirkcudbrightshire, with issue three sons, Andrew, Hugh, and William.

Mary, elder daughter of John Lewars senior, married William Hyslop, builder, Dumfriës, with issue a son and daughter.

Jessie, younger daughter, was born about the year 1778, and after her father's death in 1789 took up her abode with her brother, who occupied a small dwelling at Mill Brae (now Burns Street), Dumfries, immediately opposite the Poet's residence. The two families became intimate, Jessie being an especial favourite of Mrs. Burns, also of the Poet. One day, when the Poet was visiting Mr. Lewars, she chanced to sing the formerly popular song, known as "The Robin cam' to the Wren's Nest." Having become interested in the air, he remarked that if it would gratify the singer he would compose for it new words. Accordingly he, on a stray bit of paper, composed the song embraced in the two following stanzas :—

O wert thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee ;
Or did misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae bleak and bare, sae bleak and bare,
The desert were a Paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there ;

Or were I monarch o' the globe,
 Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign ;
 The brightest jewel in my crown
 Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

These verses, many years afterwards, when Jessie Lewars was a widow, attracted the regard of Felix Mendelssohn, who united them to an air of exquisite pathos.¹

At the time when he composed these verses, Burns was in feeble health. During the six months of illness which preceded his death, Jessie Lewars ministered to him with an affectionate solicitude. Deeply grateful for her kind services, he made her the theme of the latter efforts of his Muse.

As, in April 1796, he was handed by Miss Lewars on his sick-bed a refreshing draught, he inscribed with his diamond these lines upon the goblet :—

Fill me with the rosy wine,
 Call a toast, a toast divine ;
 Give the Poet's darling flame,
 Lovely Jessie be her name ;
 Then thou mayest freely boast,
 Thou hast given a peerless toast.

In one of his professional visits, Mr. Brown, the surgeon, brought to the Poet an advertising sheet setting forth the contents of a menagerie then being exhibited in the town. Remarking that his amiable nurse was interested in the advertisement, he on the back of it inscribed with red pencil these lines :—

¹ Dr. Robert Chambers's *Life and Works of Burns*, vol. iv. 194, 195. According to Mr. Scott Douglas, the air which Jessie Lewars played was not "The Wren's Nest," No. 406,

but "The Wren," No. 483 of Johnson's *Museum*.—Library Edition of Burns's Works, iii. 297, 316.

Talk not to me of savages
From Afric's burning sun ;
No savage e'er could rend my heart,
As, Jessie, thou hast done :
But Jessie's lovely hand in mine,
A mutual faith to plight,
Not even to view the heavenly choir
Would be so blest a sight.¹

And so to the gentle attendant of his sick-chamber did the Poet continue to express his appreciation and gratitude in warm love-breathings. Moved by her benevolence, he composed these stanzas :—

Here's a health to ane I loe dear,
Here's a health to ane I loe dear ;
Thou art sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet,
And soft as their parting tear—Jessie.

Altho' thou maun never be mine,
Altho' even hope is denied ;
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing,
Than ought in the world beside—Jessie.

I mourn thro' the gay, gaudy day,
As hopeless I muse on thy charms ;
But welcome the dream o' sweet slumber,
For then I am lockt in thine arms—Jessie.

I guess by the dear angel smile,
I guess by the love-rolling e'e ;
But why urge the tender confession
'Gainst Fortune's fell, cruel decree ?

Jessie fell sick, and the Poet indulged a more serious strain :—

¹ Transcribed from the original M.S. in possession of Mrs. Howat, Castleview, Stirling, granddaughter of Jessie Lewars.

Say, sages, what's the charm on earth
 Can turn Death's dart aside ?
 It is not purity and worth,
 Else Jessie had not died.

When his fair attendant recovered, his Muse awoke a strain of even loftier praise :—

But rarely seen since Nature's birth,
 The natives of the sky ;
 Yet still one seraph's left on earth,
 For Jessie did not die.

During his illness the Poet despatched a letter to Mr. James Johnson, publisher of the *Scots Musical Museum*, which bears to have been delivered to him by post on the 17th June 1796. The letter concludes :—

My wife has a very particular friend, a young lady who sings well, to whom she wishes to present the *Scots Musical Museum*. If you have a spare copy, will you be so obliging as to send it by the very first fly, as I am anxious to have it soon.

To the request of the dying Bard his correspondent attended at once, and, on their reception at Dumfries, the volumes were forthwith placed in Miss Lewars's hands. On the back of the title-page of the first volume the Poet inscribed these lines :—

Thine be the volumes, Jessie fair,
 And with them take the Poet's prayer :
 That Fate may in her fairest page,
 With ev'ry kindest, best presage
 Of future bliss, enrol thy name :
 With native worth and spotless fame,
 And wakeful caution, still aware
 Of ill—but chief man's felon snare ;

JESSIE LEWARS.

15

All blameless joys on earth we find,
And all the treasures of the mind—
These be thy guardian and reward ;
So prays thy faithful friend, the Bard.

R. BURNS.¹

DUMFRIES, *June 26th*, 1796.

In the possession of Miss Lewars's family is a thin quarto volume by Dr. Wolcott, entitled "*Pindarinia*, by Peter Pindar, 1794," inscribed "*A Madlle. J. Lewars, un petit gage de l'amitie. R. Burns.*"

To the close of the Poet's life Miss Lewars attended him with an affectionate solicitude, and some days before his death she and her brother received his four small boys into their dwelling. They were removed under the plea of securing quietness, but they were, subsequent to the Poet's death on the 21st July, kept under Miss Lewars's care till a movement on behalf of the Poet's family had made some progress. Robert, the Poet's eldest son, remained with the Lewars about a year.

On the 3rd of June 1799 Miss Lewars was married to James Thomson, writer, Dumfries. At the great festival in honour of the sons of the Poet held near the Ayr Monument, Mr. and Mrs. Thomson were assigned seats next to the Poet's relatives, on the right hand of the chairman. Mr. Thomson died on the 5th May 1849. Mrs. Thomson thereafter resided at Maxwelltown, near Dumfries, till her death, which took place on the 26th May 1855, when she had attained her seventy-seventh year. Her remains and those of her husband were deposited in St. Michael's Churchyard, near to the Poet's resting-place. There they are commemorated on a mural tablet.

Of the marriage of James Thomson and Jessie Lewars were born five sons and two daughters. The sons were James, born 1800,

¹ From the original in the possession of Mrs. Howat. At the commencement of line 6th the Poet inadvertently substitutes "while" for "with."

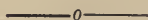
died in 1820; John, born 1802, who served his father in the writing business, and died in 1834; William, born 1805: he commanded a vessel in the merchant service, and died at the Cape of Good Hope on the 8th December 1858; Thomas, born 1st January 1810, and died August 1825; and Alexander, born 11th December 1814, and died 18th March 1859.

The elder daughter, Mary, born 25th June 1807, married, 30th March 1840, George Montgomery, merchant, Dumfries, who died 28th September 1843, with issue a son, George, and a daughter, Jessie Lewars.

George, born 26th May 1843, is a merchant in Dundee. He married, first, Alice Walker, with issue a son and daughter; secondly Isabella, daughter of David Niven, writer, Dundee, with issue a son and daughter.

Jessie Lewars, only daughter of George Montgomery and Mary Thomson, spouses, married, 2nd April 1861, William Howat, merchant, Dumfries, now of Castleview, Stirling, with issue three sons and three daughters.

Jessie, younger daughter of James Thomson and Jessie Lewars, was born 16th June 1816; she died unmarried in September 1877.



ISABELLA LINDSAY.

DURING his Border tour in May 1787, the Poet was at Jedburgh attracted by a bright and graceful maiden, whom he thus introduces in his Journal:—

Miss Lindsay, a good-humoured, amiable girl: rather short and *embonpoint*, but handsome and extremely graceful—beautiful hazel eyes, full of spirit and sparkling with delicious moisture—an engaging face, *un tout ensemble* that speaks her of the first order of female minds.

These entries follow :—

Get hold of Miss Lindsay's arm . . . Miss seems very well pleased with my bardship's distinguishing her; and after some slight qualms, which I could easily mark, she sets the titter round at defiance, and kindly allows me to keep my hold. . . Miss Lindsay and myself go to see *Esther*, a very remarkable woman for reciting poetry of all kinds. . . I walk in *Esther's*¹ garden with Miss Lindsay, and after some little chit-chat of the tender kind, I presented her with a proof print of my *nob*, which she accepted with something more tender than gratitude. She told me many little stories which Miss — had retailed concerning her and me, with prolonging pleasure—God bless her.

In closing the narrative of his visit to Jedburgh, the Poet has these words :—

Sweet Isabella Lindsay, may peace dwell in thy bosom, uninterrupted, except by the tumultuous throbbings of rapturous love! That love-kindling eye must beam on another, not on me—that graceful form must bless another's arms, not mine.

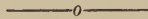
Daughter of Dr. Robert Lindsay, by his wife Jean Cumming, Isabella Lindsay was born at Jedburgh on the 28th September 1764.² Her father, who practised as a physician in the place, was dead at the time when the Poet met her, and she, along with a younger sister, Margaret, was then resident with a brother, who had as a physician succeeded to their father's medical practice. On the 14th June 1787, thirty-four days after she had on the 11th of May parted with the Poet, Isabella was married to Mr. Adam Armstrong, her engagement with whom, well known in the locality, had induced some unamiable persons of her own sex, to keenly censure her easy manners with the Poet. With her husband, who was in the employment of the Russian Government, she left Jedburgh

¹ *Esther* Easton, the wife of a working gardener; she possessed an uncommon memory and other gifts.

² Jedburgh Parish Register.

on the 4th of July, and, embarking for Russia on the 17th of the month, they landed at St. Petersburg on the 10th of August. Mrs. Armstrong did not return to Scotland. She died young, leaving four children, of whom Samuel, the eldest, was born on the 21st April 1788.¹ Robert, the youngest son, became a general in the Russian service, and so lately as 1856 held office as Director of the Imperial Mint at St. Petersburg. Possessed by that gentleman's representatives is the historically interesting mansion at Jedburgh, known as Queen Mary's House, now occupied by Mr. A. C. Mounsey, master of the grammar school.

Margaret Lindsay, Isabella's younger sister, described in his *Border Journal* by the Poet as "a bonnie, strappin', rosy, sonsie lass," died at Jedburgh not long after the Poet's visit, at the age of twenty-two.



JOHN LOGAN OF LAIGHT AND KNOCKSHINNOCH.

THE noted "Black Agnes," Countess of Dunbar, succeeded in 1346 to the lands of Cumnock in Ayrshire. These lands continued in the ownership of the Dunbars for a course of centuries, and from the last of these Ayrshire landowners James Logan of Lagwine, near Carsphairn in Galloway, purchased, about the middle of the eighteenth century, the small estate of Knockshinnoch, in the parish of New Cumnock. He married Margaret Begg, daughter of the laird of Dornel, in the parish of Auchinleck.

In the lands of Knockshinnoch James Logan was succeeded by

¹ Several of these facts and dates are obtained from family memoranda of Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong inscribed inside the boards of a small copy

of Thomson's *Seasons* (Dublin, 1758), now in the possession of Mr. Mounsey of the grammar school of Jedburgh.

his son, John, who married Martha, only child of Captain Macadam of Laight and Carca, on the banks of the Afton. On the death of his father-in-law he removed to the mansion of Laight, that estate immediately bordering his own possession. Inheriting vigorous powers from his mother, he associated with persons of intelligence and culture. Burns was recommended to his notice by Gavin Hamilton, with whom he was on terms of intimacy. When the Poet was spending a few days at Kilmarnock in the beginning of August 1786, waiting upon the distribution of his first edition, he from thence despatched to Mr. Logan the following letter:—

STR,—I gratefully thank you for your kind offices in promoting my subscription, and still more for your very friendly letter—the first was doing me a favor, but the last was doing me an honor. I am in such a bustle at present, preparing for my West-India voyage, as I expect a letter every day from the master of the vessel, to repair directly to Greenock — that I am under a necessity to return you the subscription bills, and trouble you with the quantum of copies till called for, or otherwise transmitted to the gentlemen who have subscribed. . . . If orders from Greenock do not hinder, I intend doing myself the honor of waiting on you Wednesday the 16th inst. I am much hurt, sir, that I must trouble you with the copies; but, circumstanced as I am, I know no other way your friends can be supplied.

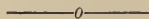
With Mr. Logan the Poet maintained a considerable intimacy; he visited him occasionally during his frequent journeys between Ellisland and Mauchline. In a letter dated Ellisland, 7th August 1789, he intimates that he has therewith transmitted for his private perusal his poem of “The Kirk’s Alarm,” remarking that it was the first copy he had sent into Ayrshire, excepting a few stanzas he had handed to Gavin Hamilton. The Poet also informs his correspondent that he had composed three and a half stanzas of a poetical epistle to him, but that a prosaic mood had overcome him. The epistle was therefore not forthcoming, but to the copy of “The

Kirk's Alarm" were, for his friend's benefit, appended these lines :—

Afton's Laird ! Afton's Laird !
 When your pen can be spared,
 A copy of this I bequeath,
 On the same sicker score
 As I mention'd before,
 To that trusty auld worthy, Clackleith,
 Afton's Laird !
 To that trusty auld worthy, Clackleith.

Burns continued, in the course of his rides to and from Ayrshire, to visit Mr. Logan at Laight, in Glen Afton, and during one of his visits, apparently in 1791, he composed his exquisite pastoral song, "Afton Water."

Mr. Logan latterly resided at Ayr, where he died on the 9th March 1816. Of his several children, John, the eldest son, a major in the army, succeeded him in his estates. Becoming heavily involved, he was under the necessity of alienating his possessions. His daughter married in 1834 Mr. John Dunbar of New Cumnock, and the event of their golden wedding was celebrated in February 1884.



JEAN LORIMER.

JEAN LORIMER was a conspicuous heroine of the Poet's fancy. To her personal history we are introduced in the marriage register of Dumfries by the following entry :—"October 4, 1772. William Lorimer, merchant in this place, son to John Lorimer in the parish of Moffat, and Agnes Carson, daughter of John Carson, in the parish of Morton, proclaimed." As in 1775 we find William Lorimer resident with his family at Craigieburn, in the neighbour-

hood of Moffat, it may be assumed that he had then or previously succeeded to his father's inheritance—probably the lease of Craigieburn farm. William Lorimer next appears as resident on the farm of Kemmis-hall on the Nith, about two miles below Ellisland. At that period, he, in addition to his business as a farmer, conducted merchandise at Dumfries, dealing in spirits, tea, and other excisable articles. Consequent on his commercial relations, the Poet, who then protected the revenue interests of ten parishes, formed his acquaintance about the year 1790, and a warm intimacy ensued.

Mrs. Lorimer's friendship was indeed not to be coveted. She largely imbibed whisky and other stimulants, and was frequently intoxicated. Presuming on her husband's intimacy with the Poet, she subjected him to the suspicion of illicit dealing, to an extent that a revenue officer might scarcely overlook. It is related that on one occasion the Poet was, through Mrs. Lorimer's imprudence, placed in circumstances in which his friendship was subjected to a considerable strain. Having arrived one evening at Mr. Lorimer's farm, he put up his horse, and, entering the house by the back door, passed into the kitchen. There he found Mrs. Lorimer and her maidens occupied in preparing tallow candles, then an article of Excise. Embarrassed by the spectacle, the Poet, with the remark, "You're thrang, I see," passed hastily into the parlour.

Among the members of Mr. Lorimer's family circle his daughter Jean attracted the kindly notice both of the Poet and his wife. Jean Lorimer was born in September 1775, when her parents were resident at Craigieburn; consequently, when the Poet and his wife formed her acquaintance in 1791, she was in her sixteenth year. She was then peculiarly engaging. Tall of stature and of graceful proportions, she was of a delicate complexion, while her light blue eyes dazzled by the warmth of her manners. Among her other admirers was Mr. John Gillespie, a brother officer of the Poet,

settled at Dumfries. Revealing his attachment to the Poet, he proceeded on his friend's behalf to celebrate his charmer. In allusion to the romantic spot of her birth, his verses began :—

Sweet closes the ev'ning on Craigieburn Wood,
 And blythely awaukens the morrow ;
 But the pride o' the spring in the Craigieburn Wood
 Can yield me nought but sorrow.

At a subsequent period, Burns, on the suggestion of Mr. George Thomson, produced the song in an amended version, being that included in the ordinary editions of his works. In the new version the song commences thus :—

Sweet fa's the eve on Craigieburn,
 And blythe awakes the morrow ;
 But a' the pride o' spring's return
 Can yield me nocht but sorrow.

By the Poet other songs followed, addressed to his friend's fair enslaver. These included the stanzas beginning; "Come, let me take thee to my breast," and the song "Poortith Cauld." The latter contains these two verses in gentle allusion to the rejection of her suitor on account of his poverty :—

Her e'en sae bonnie blue betray
 How she repays my passion ;
 But prudence is her o'erword aye,
 She talks o' rank and fashion.

How blest the simple cotter's fate !
 He woos his artless dearie ;
 The silly bogles, wealth and state,
 Can never make him eerie.

If the fair inspirer of the Poet's muse was inclined more to reciprocate the affection of an opulent than of a sincere and

unsophisticated lover, she was in her election doomed to a sad and bitter disappointment. A young man named Whelpdale, from the county of Cumberland, had, as a farmer, settled at Barnhill, near Moffat. At the residence of a neighbour, Mr. Johnston, farmer at Drumerieff, where Miss Lorimer chanced to be on a visit, Mr. Whelpdale met her. Smitten by her charms, he professed his attachment, and his love was reciprocated. After a brief acquaintance, he one evening in March 1793 took her aside, and, protesting he could no longer live apart from her society, persuaded her to elope with him to Gretna Green, that there they might be married. Believing that her husband's prosperity would sufficiently condone the offence of an irregular marriage, she unhappily listened to the solicitation made to her. At Gretna she became the wife of one who, then on the verge of bankruptcy, was hopelessly reckless, prodigal, and extravagant. The married pair returned to Barnhill, but, after an interval of a few months, Mr. Whelpdale absconded from his creditors, leaving his deeply-injured wife no alternative but to seek shelter under the parental roof. There ensued the usual desertion, which disappointed neighbours mete out to the victims of imprudence. Burns was true. In his former heroine he recognised one who had become unfortunate because she was trustful, and she was still his Chloris. In his ode beginning, "Sae flaxen were her ringlets," he particularly celebrates her charms.

Unfortunate as an agriculturist, also in his commercial relations, William Lorimer removed from Kemmis-hall to Dumfries. Miss Lorimer, as she elected to be called, ignoring her wedded name, now became a regular visitor in the Poet's family; and the Poet's wife, whose Christian name was the same as her own, viewed without a spark of jealousy the compliments lavished in verse by her husband upon the younger Jean, in the hope that these tributes to her beauty might in some degree mitigate her great sorrow.

The song of "Whistle, an' I'll come to you, my lad," though associated with other heroines, was actually inspired by Miss Lorimer. She also became the theme of the songs commencing, "Behold, my love, how green the groves;" "O, bonnie was yon rosy brier;" and "Forlorn, my love, no comfort near." When Miss Lorimer was sick, the Poet addressed her in the ode commencing with the verse,—

Can I cease to care,
Can I cease to languish,
While my darling fair
Is on the couch of anguish?

In reference to the inspiration derived from the charms of his Chloris, the Poet writes to Mr. Thomson, in October 1794:—

The lady on whom it ["Craigieburn Wood"] was made is one of the finest women in Scotland; and, in fact (*entre nous*), is in a manner to me what Sterne's Eliza was to him,—a mistress, or friend, or what you will, in the guileless simplicity of Platonic love. . . . I assure you that to my lovely friend you are indebted for many of your best songs of mine. . . . Whenever I want to be more than ordinary in song—to be in some degree equal to your diviner airs, . . . I have a glorious recipe . . . I put myself in the regimen of admiring a fine woman. . . . The lightning of her eye is the godhead of Parnassus, and the witchery of her smile the divinity of Helicon!

The latter history of Burns's connexion with the Lorimer family is somewhat uncertain. In August 1795, when the Poet was visited by his friend, Mr. Robert Cleghorn, accompanied by two other Midlothian farmers, he invited to meet them Mr. Syme, Dr. Maxwell, and Dr. Mundell, also Mr. Lorimer and his daughter Jean. The note of invitation addressed to Mr. Lorimer is in the Library edition of the Poet's Works printed for the first time. It proceeds thus:—

MY DEAR SIR,—I called for you yesternight, both at your own house and at your favorite lady's, Mrs. Hyslop of the Globe, but could not find you. I

want you to dine with me to-day. I have two honest Midlothian farmers with me who have travelled threescore miles to renew old friendship with the Poet; and I promise you a pleasant party, a plateful of hotch-potch, and a bottle of good sound port.

Mrs. Burns desired me yesternight to beg the favor of Jeany to come and partake with her, and she was so obliging as to promise that she would. Jeany and you (Mr. Syme, Dr. Maxwell, and Dr. Mundell) are all the people, besides my Edinburgh friends, whom I wish to see; and if you can come I shall take it very kind. (Dinner at three.)—Yours,
ROBERT BURNS.

With the Lorimer family the Poet's intimacy waned. Writing to Mr. Thomson in February 1796, Burns uses these words:—

In my by-past songs I dislike one thing,—the name Chloris. I meant it as the fictitious name of a certain lady; but, on second thoughts, it is a high incongruity to have a Greek appellation to a Scottish pastoral ballad. Of this and some things else in my next: I have more amendments to propose. What you mentioned of “flaxen locks” is just; they cannot enter into an elegant description of beauty.

The Lorimers sank into poverty. As a family governess, Miss Lorimer was employed in a succession of families. In 1816 she visited her brother in Sunderland, and on her return inquired at Brampton for her husband, and found that she had missed him only by a few hours, since he had been that day in the village. Already he had wasted four fortunes, and was now engaged in squandering a fifth. Soon afterwards his long-deserted wife learned that he was in the debtors' prison at Carlisle, and there went to see him. The circumstances of her visit are by Dr. Robert Chambers related thus:—

Having announced to him her wish for an interview, she went to the place where he was confined, and was desired to walk in. His lodging was pointed out to her on the opposite side of a quadrangle, round which there was a covered walk, as in the ambulatories of the ancient religious houses. As she walked along one side of this court, she passed a man whose back was towards her—a bulky-looking person, slightly paralytic, and who shuffled in walking as

from lameness. As she approached the door she heard the man pronounce her name. "Jean," he said, and then immediately added, as under a more formal feeling, "Mrs. Whelpdale!" It was her husband, the gay youth of 1793, being now transformed into a broken-down, middle-aged man, whom she had passed without even suspecting who he was. The wife had to ask the figure if he was her husband, and the figure answered that he was. To such a scene may a romantic marriage lead! There was kindness, nevertheless, between the long-separated pair. Jean spent a month in Carlisle, calling upon her husband every day, and then returned to Scotland. Some months afterwards, when he had been liberated, she paid him another visit; but his utter inability to make a prudent use of any money entrusted to him rendered it quite impossible that they should ever renew their conjugal life. After this she never saw him again.

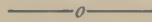
According to Dr. Chambers, the Poet's Chloris at length fell into an error by which she forfeited the respect of society. For some years she led a kind of wandering life, bordering on mendicancy. About the year 1825 a benevolent gentleman interested himself on her behalf by making known her circumstances in the public journals. His wife, having sent to her some newspapers containing the paragraphs written on her account, received in acknowledgment the following note:—

Burns's Chloris is infinitely obliged to Mrs. — for her kind attention in sending the newspapers, and feels pleased and flattered by having so much said and done in her behalf. Ruth was kindly and generously treated by Boaz; perhaps Burns's Chloris may enjoy a similar fate in the fields of men of talent and worth. March 2, 1825.

Some time afterwards Mrs. Whelpdale obtained the situation of housekeeper with a gentleman in Newington; and while so employed she expressed herself as enjoying greater comfort than she had experienced since she had left the parental home. At length she was attacked by a severe pulmonary ailment, and was obliged to retire to a humble lodging in Middleton's Entry, Potterrow,

where she was supported by her late employer. After a period of severe suffering, she breathed her last in September 1831; she had attained her fifty-sixth year. Her remains were interred in the Newington burial-ground. Her husband, who latterly subsisted on a small pension at Langholm in Dumfriesshire, survived her by a few years.

To the close of life the heroine of so many of the Poet's songs retained her native comeliness. Abundantly intelligent, she excelled in conversation, and could restrain with difficulty that play of humour which had distinguished her youth, and which the disappointments and misfortunes of a life had not eradicated.



JEAN MARKLAND.

GEORGE MARKLAND conducted business at Mauchline as a general dealer; he sold articles of grocery, dealt in drapery, and, by keeping several cows, became one of the village dairymen. Among the general traders at Mauchline there prevailed an unpleasant rivalry, and, consequent on its existence, Markland experienced from one or two of his neighbours considerable hostilities; but he was generally esteemed as a fair dealer and creditable townsman. He married, in August 1761, Agnes Shaw, of the parish of Craigie,¹ and had issue. His daughter Jean, born on the 20th October 1765,² was celebrated by the Poet in 1784 in his "Belles of Mauchline:" she is by the Bard characterized as "divine." On the 16th September 1788 Miss Markland married Mr. James Findlay, Excise officer at Tarbolton,³ a native of the district. Mr. Findlay was subsequently resident at Greenock; he obtained some reputation as a poet.

¹ Mauchline Parish Register.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

JOHN MACKENZIE, M.D.

A NATIVE of Ayrshire, John Mackenzie studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh, and was induced to commence medical practice in the village of Mauchline on the invitation of Sir John Whitefoord, Bart. His acquaintance with the Poet's family commenced at Lochlea in the early spring of 1783, when he paid a professional visit to William Burnes, then in a state of failing health. His impressions of the Bard on the occasion of this visit he has detailed in a letter to Professor Walker, written in 1810. In this letter he writes thus :—

The Poet seemed distant, suspicious, and without any wish to interest or please. He kept himself very silent in a dark corner of the room ; and before he took any part in the conversation, I frequently detected him scrutinizing me during my conversation with his father and brother. But afterwards, when the conversation, which was on a medical subject, had taken the turn he wished, he began to engage in it, displaying a dexterity of reasoning, an ingenuity of reflection, and a familiarity with topics apparently beyond his reach, by which his visitor was no less gratified than astonished.

Dr. Mackenzie proceeds :—

From the period of which I speak, I took a lively interest in Robert Burns ; and before I was acquainted with his poetical powers, I perceived that he possessed very great mental abilities, an uncommonly fertile and lively imagination, a thorough acquaintance with many of our Scottish poets, and an enthusiastic admiration of Ramsay and Fergusson. Even then, on subjects with which he was acquainted, his conversation was rich in well-chosen figures, animated and energetic. Indeed, I have always thought that no person could have a just idea of the extent of Burns's talents who had not had an opportunity to hear him converse. His discrimination of character was great beyond that of any person

I ever knew ; and I have often observed to him that it seemed to be intuitive. I seldom ever know him make a false estimate of character, when he formed the opinion from his own observation, and not from the representation of persons to whom he was partial.

When the Poet entered on the lease of Mossgiel, Dr. Mackenzie met him frequently, and a warm intimacy ensued. Depute Master of St. James' Lodge, Tarbolton, the Poet summoned him, as a brother Mason, to attend a grand procession which had been arranged to take place on the 24th June 1786, being the Festival of the Nativity of the Baptist. The Poet's summons was in these lines :—

Friday first's the day appointed
 By the Right Worshipful anointed,
 To hold our grand procession ;
 To get a blad o' Johnie's morals,
 And taste a swatch o' Manson's barrels,
 I' the way of our profession.
 The Master and the Brotherhood
 Would a' be glad to see you ;
 For me, I would be mair than proud
 To share the mercies wi' you.
 If Death, then, wi' skaith, then
 Some mortal heart is hechtin ;¹
 Inform him, and storm him,
 That Saturday you'll fecht him.

To these lines are appended as a date, "Mossgiel, An. M., 5790." The "Johnie" of the verses was the kindly surgeon himself, who had lately broached some views as to the origin of morals. To some controversial opinions, written or printed, he had appended the signature of "Common-sense," an appellative by which the Poet

¹ Threatening.

afterwards distinguished him. In "The Holy Fair," Dr. Mackenzie is introduced thus:—

"Common-sense," has ta'en the road,
An' off, an' up the Cowgate,
Fast, fast, that day.¹

A copy of "The Holy Fair" Dr. Mackenzie showed in MS. to Dr. Hugh Blair, whom he met at Barskimming, the Ayrshire seat of Thomas Miller, advocate, subsequently Lord President. In a letter to Dr. Mackenzie, Dr. Blair expressed himself as "much pleased," remarking that the poem "contained some of the finest and justest description he had ever seen."²

On Sunday, the 3rd September 1786, Burns sent to Dr. Mackenzie a first draft of his stanzas entitled "The Calf," composed at the expense of a reverend preacher who had that day conducted service in Mauchline church. The MS. was accompanied by a note beginning, "Dr. Sir," and ending, "Yours, Robt. Burns."

Not long afterwards, the Mauchline surgeon embraced a suitable opportunity of making the Poet known personally to Professor Dugald Stewart, who was then residing in his villa at Catrine, about two miles distant. The Professor invited the physician and the Poet to dine with his family on the 23rd October, and on the occasion Lord Daer formed one of the company. To Dr. Mackenzie the Poet, in about a week afterwards, enclosed his lines "On Meeting with Lord Daer," which on the same sheet was accompanied by the following letter:—

¹ The Cowgate is a street running off the main thoroughfare in Mauchline, immediately opposite the entrance to the churchyard. According to a local tradition, on the particular day the Poet had in view, Dr. Mackenzie was

engaged to meet Sir John Whitefoord, and to accompany him to dine with the Earl of Dumfries at Dumfries House, in the parish of Auchinleck. With this known purpose, the Doctor was remarked to leave the assembly.

² Dr. Mackenzie's letter to Professor Walker.

Wednesday Morning.

DEAR SIR,—I never spent an afternoon among great folks with half that pleasure as when, in company with you, I had the honor of paying my devoirs to that plain, honest, worthy man, the Professor: I would be delighted to see him perform acts of kindness and friendship, though I were not the object: he does it with such a grace. I think his character, divided into ten parts, stands thus: four parts Socrates, four parts Nathanael, and two parts Shakespeare's Brutus.

The foregoing verses were really extempore, but a little corrected since. They may entertain you a little with the help of that partiality with which you are so good as to favour the performances of, Dear Sir, your very humble servant.

Anticipatory of the Poet's journey to Edinburgh at the close of November, Dr. Mackenzie addressed on his behalf recommendatory letters to Sir John Whitefoord and the Hon. Andrew Erskine. The latter, a brother of the Earl of Kelly, and usually known as Captain Erskine, was an accomplished musician, and was otherwise much esteemed in Edinburgh society. But the Poet experienced from Sir John Whitefoord a special attention. With reference to his active friendship, he in a letter to Dr. Mackenzie, written from Edinburgh on the 11th January 1787, writes thus:—

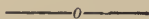
MY DEAR SIR,—Yours gave me something like the pleasure of an old friend's face. I saw *your* friend, and *my* honoured patron, Sir John Whitefoord, just after I read your letter, and gave him your respectful compliments. He was pleased to say many handsome things of you, which I heard with the more satisfaction, as I knew them to be just.

The letter concludes:—"A gentleman waited on me yesterday, and gave me, by Lord Eglintoun's order, ten guineas by way of subscription for a brace of copies of my second edition."

When, a few years afterwards, Lord Eglinton removed his chief residence from Coilsfield to Eglinton Castle, he induced Dr. Mackenzie, as his family physician, to settle at Irvine. There the Doctor took an active concern in local affairs, and attained the highest magisterial honours. In 1827 he retired from practice, and

settled in Edinburgh, where he died on the 11th January 1837, at an advanced age. When practising at Mauchline, it was his privilege to professionally attend the Countess of Loudoun, widow of the third Earl, a gentlewoman who was born in 1677, during the reign of Charles II., and whose life extended to one hundred years.

When Dr. Mackenzie entered on professional business at Mauchline, he rented a small shop, which served as his drug store and consulting room, while he was content to lodge at the Sun Inn, a small hostelry, kept by John Miller, a respectable joiner. By his wife, Sarah Templeton, Miller had several children, these including two daughters, celebrated by the Poet in his "Mauchline Belles." Of these, Elizabeth, born in January 1768, married, on the 8th September 1794, William Templeton, a merchant in the place;¹ she died on the birth of her first child. Helen, another of the "belles," became the wife of Dr. Mackenzie, their marriage being solemnized on the 29th August 1791.² To her husband she brought a large dowry, consequent on her becoming heir of her brother, Alexander, who made a fortune in India. A son of the marriage, John Whitefoord Mackenzie, became a Writer to the Signet, and attained eminence as a literary and antiquarian collector; he died at Edinburgh on the 8th November 1884, at an advanced age.



ALLAN MASTERTON.

THE lands of Masterton, lying in the parish of Dunfermline, are so designated from the Anglo-Saxon *Maestertun*, signifying the habitation of the master. Under the former name of Ledmacdunegil, the

¹ Mauchline Parish Register.

² *Ibid.*

lands were granted by Malcolm IV. to the monks of Dunfermline.¹ Among the barons who in 1296 swore fealty to Edward I., appears William de Masterton. A descendant of the family, Margaret, daughter of Alexander Masterton of the lands of Bad and Parkmill, in the county of Perth, and wife of Mr. James Primrose, was nurse to Prince Henry, eldest son of James VI., for which service she and her husband received a pension during their lives. On the 20th January 1591-92 Captain Robert Masterton of Pittenweem appears as pursuer in a legal process.² In a process are named, on the 28th February 1591-92, John Masterton of Broughton, and Edmund, his son and heir.³ On the 15th March 1595 Gilbert Masterton, merchant in Edinburgh, is mentioned in a bond.⁴

A branch of the Masterton family settled in the county of Linlithgow. On the 3rd April 1585 Archibald Masterton, of the parish of Abercorn, had his daughter Agnes baptized.⁵ Alexander Masterton, merchant, and one of the magistrates of Linlithgow, married, in February 1691, Margaret Glen; they had on the 5th February 1693 a daughter, Marion, baptized.⁶ On the 29th November 1702 Thomas Masterton, merchant in Linlithgow, had a son, Robert, baptized.⁷ At Linlithgow, on the 23rd February 1735, Archibald Masterton, son of Archibald Masterton, miller in Wrae Mill, and Helen West, relict of William Jamieson, tenant in Wrae, had their banns of marriage proclaimed.⁸

From the Linlithgowshire family derived Allan Masterton, who, when Burns resided in Edinburgh, exercised the vocation of a writing-master in Stevenlaw's Close, High Street. From this office

¹ Chartulary of Dunfermline, p. 23.

² General Register of Deeds, vol. xxxix.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. xxxix. fol. 208.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. li.

⁵ Abercorn Parish Register.

⁶ Linlithgow Parish Register.

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⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.* For further particulars respecting the Masterton family, see *Genealogy of Masterton of that Ilk, Parkmill, etc.*, privately printed, 4to, 1878.

he was by the Town Council, on the 26th August 1795, promoted as teacher of writing in the High School, conjointly with his brother Dugald, and his nephew, Dugald Masterton, junior.

To his skill as a writing-master, Allan Masterton added an acquaintance with the national minstrelsy; he was also accomplished as a musical composer. With the Poet he became acquainted on the introduction of William Nicol, and the acquaintance ripened into a warm friendship. In the autumn of 1789 Nicol took lodgings at Willie's Mill, a place situated in the vicinity of Moffat, and there he was waited on by the Poet, accompanied by Masterton, who had been on a visit to Dalswinton. The jollities of the occasion induced the Poet to compose his song of "Willie brew'd," which was set to music by Masterton. He is the Allan of the song. In his letter to Captain Riddel, dated 16th October 1789, the Poet describes Masterton as "one of the worthiest men in the world, and a man of real genius."

Among other tunes composed by Allan Masterton for Burns's songs were those to "Strathallan's Lament," "The Braes o' Ballochmyle," "The Bonnie Birks o' Ayr," and "On hearing a Young Lady sing." In compliment to Mr. Masterton's daughter, Anne, the Poet composed the song beginning, "Ye gallants bright, I rede ye right," to which the young lady's father added the music. Anne Masterton married Dr. Derbishire, who practised as a physician, first at Bath and afterwards in London. She was living in London in 1834; the date of her death is unknown. Her son, Stewart Derbishire, became Queen's Printer at Quebec; he died there on the 27th March 1863.

Allan Masterton died in 1799.

REV. JOHN M'MATH.

JOHN M'MATH was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Ayr on the 5th July 1779, and on the 16th May 1782 was admitted assistant and successor to the Rev. Patrick Wodrow, minister at Tarbolton. Both he and his constituent, Mr. Wodrow, belonged to the Moderate school, and hence in "The Twa Herds" the Poet writes :—

Auld Wodrow lang has hatch'd mischief ;
 We thought aye death wad bring relief,
 But he has gotten, to our grief,
 Ane to succeed him,
 A chield wha'll soundly buff our beef ;
 I meikle dread him.

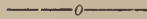
Enjoying the Poet's intimacy, Mr. M'Math begged him for a copy of "Holy Willie's Prayer." This he sent to Mr. M'Math on the 17th September 1785, accompanied by a poetical epistle of sixteen stanzas. In reference to his correspondent personally the Poet has these lines :—

O Ayr ! my dear, my native ground,
 Within thy presbyterial bound
 A candid liberal band is found
 Of public teachers,
 As men, as Christians too, renown'd,
 An' manly preachers.

Sir, in that circle you are nam'd ;
 Sir, in that circle you are fan'd ;
 An' some, by whom your doctrine's blam'd
 (Which gies ye honor),
 Even, sir, by them your heart's esteemed,
 An' winning manner.

Pardon this freedom I have ta'en,
 An' if impertinent I've been,
 Impute it not, good sir, in ane
 Whase heart ne'er wrang'd ye,
 But to his utmost would befriend
 Ought that belang'd ye.

Having fallen into convivial habits incompatible with the ministerial office, Mr. M'Math demitted his charge on the 21st December 1791. Retiring to Rossul, in the Isle of Mull, he there lived in obscurity. He died on the 10th December 1825, about the age of seventy.



JOHN MAXWELL OF TERRAUGHTY.

THERE is a tradition that the first of the Maxwell name was a Norwegian in the suite of Edgar Atheling and his sister, on their arrival in the Frith of Forth two years after the Norman Conquest. This is probably mythical ; but the name is clearly of Saxon origin. A territory on the Tweed, near Kelso, is known as Maccus Well, and the owner of this portion of land was in all probability founder of the family. Eugene or Hugh Maccuswel, of Carlaverock, was present at the siege of Alnwick in 1093, as a follower of Malcolm Canmore. Sir John de Maccuswel was sheriff of Roxburgh and Teviotdale in 1207, and in 1215 was sent as ambassador to King John ; he was also chamberlain of Scotland. His representatives attained large possessions, also civil dignities and military honours.

Sir Herbert Maxwell of Carlaverock was knighted at the coronation of James I. in 1424, and was some years afterwards created a Lord of Parliament. His descendant, Sir John Maxwell, second son of Robert, fifth Lord Maxwell, married in 1549 Agnes, Lady Herries, and, in right of his wife, was allowed the title and dignity of fourth Lord Herries. Attached to the cause of Queen Mary, he contended on her behalf at Langside, and subsequently assisted in her escape. He afterwards pleaded the cause of the imprisoned queen before the English Commissioners at York. His grandson, John, sixth Lord Herries, who died in 1631, married Elizabeth, eldest daughter of John, seventh Lord Maxwell, and of the union were born eight sons. James Maxwell, the second son, styled of Breconside, married Margaret, daughter of Vaus of Barnbarroch, relict of Sir John Gordon of Lochinvar, who bore him two sons. Of these, John, the elder, inherited the lands of Breconside and Terraughty. The son of this gentleman, who had the same Christian name, became involved in financial difficulties, to the entire impoverishment of his family. His younger son, John, was born at Buittle on the 7th of February 1720, old style. Apprenticed to a joiner at Dumfries, he, on attaining a sufficient knowledge of his craft, entered upon business in the place as an upholsterer and builder. Applying to his vocation the energies of a powerful understanding, he rapidly accumulated substance, and, when only in his thirty-fourth year, he was enabled to repurchase the family estate of Terraughty, which had been alienated. He subsequently purchased the lands of Portrack, in the parish of Holywood, and, by his second marriage, became proprietor of Munches. When Burns settled in Dumfriesshire, he was a recognised leader in county affairs, and was also highly esteemed for his personal virtues. At what time the Poet formed his acquaintance has not been ascertained, but it is evident that he had become

The Poet's vaticination as to his friend's longevity was in a measure realized, for his life was extended till he reached the patriarchal age of ninety-four.¹ On the 8th February 1811, while in his ninety-first year, he addressed a letter to Mr. W. M. Herries of Spottes, detailing his early recollections as to the agricultural condition of his neighbourhood. From that letter, which is included in the New Statistical Account of the parish of Buittle, we present a copious excerpt. Referring to the years 1735 or 1740, he proceeds :—

It is not pleasant to represent the wretched state of individuals as times then went in Scotland. The tenants in general lived very meanly on kail, groats, milk, grasson ground in querns turned by the hand, and the grain dried in a pot, together with a crook ewe now and then about Martinmas. They were clothed very plainly, and their habitations were most uncomfortable. Their general wear was of cloth, made of waulked plaiding, black and white wool mixed, very coarse, and the cloth rarely dyed. Their hose were made of white plaiding cloth sewed together, with single-soled shoes, and a black or blue bonnet—none having hats but the lairds, who thought themselves very well dressed for going to church on Sunday with a black kelt-coat of their wife's making. It is not proper for me here to narrate the distress and poverty that were felt in the country during these times, which continued till about the year 1735. In 1725 potatoes were first introduced into this stewartry by William Hyland from Ireland, who carried them on horses' backs to Edinburgh, where he sold them by pounds and ounces. During these times when potatoes were not generally raised in the country, there was, for the most part, a great scarcity of food, bordering on famine; for in the stewartry of Kirkcudbright and county of Dumfries there was not as much victual produced as was necessary for supplying the inhabitants, and the chief part of what was required for that purpose was brought from the sand-beds of Esk in tumbling cars, on the Wednesdays, to Dumfries; and when the waters were high, by reason of spates, and there being no bridges, so that these cars could not come with the

¹ In his first ballad on Mr. Heron's election, in 1795, the Poet distinguishes Mr. Maxwell as "Tough Jockie."

meal, I have seen the tradesmen's wives in the streets of Dumfries crying because there was none to be got. At that period there was only one baker in Dumfries, and he made bawbee baps of coarse flour, chiefly bran, which he occasionally carried in creels to the fairs of Urr and Kirkpatrick. The produce of the country in general was grey corn, and you might have travelled from Dumfries to Kirkeudbright, which is twenty-seven miles, without seeing any other grain, except in a gentleman's croft, which, in general, produced bear or big for one-third part, another third in white oats, and the remaining third in grey oats. At that period there was no wheat raised in the country; what was used was brought from Teviot, and it was believed that the soil would not produce wheat. In the year 1735 there was no mill in the country for grinding that sort of grain, and the first flour-mill that was constructed in these bounds was built by old Heron at Clouden, in the parish of Irongray, some years after that date. In these times cattle were also very low. I remember of being present at the Bridge-end of Dumfries in 1736, when Anthony M'Kie of Netherlaw sold five score of five-year-old Galloway cattle, in good condition, to an Englishman at £2, 12s. 6d. each; and old Robert Halliday, who was tenant of a great part of the Preston estate, told me that he reckoned he could graze his cattle on his farms for 2s. 6d. a head—that is to say, that his rent corresponded to that sum. At this period few of the proprietors gave themselves any concern anent the articles of husbandry—their chief one being about black cattle. William Craik, Esq., of Arbigland's father died in 1735, and his son was a man of uncommon accomplishments, who, in his younger days, employed his time in grazing of cattle, and studying the shapes of the best kinds—his father having given him the farm of Maxwelltown to live upon. The estate of Arbigland was then in its natural state, very much covered with whins and broom, and yielding little rent, being only about 3000 merks a year.¹ That young gentleman was among the first that undertook to improve the soil; and the practice of husbandry, which he pursued, together with the care and trouble which he took in ameliorating his farm, was very great. Some of it he brought to such perfection, by clearing off all weeds and stones, and pulverized it so completely, that I, on walking over the surface, sank as if I had trodden on new-fallen snow.

The estate of Arbigland was bought by his grandfather in 1722, from the Earl of Southesk, for 22,000 merks.

¹ Eighteen merks make £1 sterling, or £12 Scots.

In 1735 there were only two carts for hire in the town of Dumfries, and one belonging to a private gentleman.

About the years 1737 and 1738 there was almost no lime used for building in Dumfries except a little shell-lime, made of cockle-shells, burned at Colvend, and brought to Dumfries in bags, a distance of twenty miles; and in 1740, when Provost Bell built his house, the under storey was built with clay, and the upper storeys with lime, brought from Whitehaven in dry-ware casks. There was then no lime used for improving the land. In 1749 I had day-labourers at 6d. per day, and the best masons at 1s. This was at the building of Mollance House—the walls of which cost £49 sterling.

Mr. Maxwell died on the 25th January 1814. He was twice married. By his first wife, Agnes, daughter of Mr. William Hannay of Dumfries, he had three sons and six daughters. He married, secondly, in 1770, Agnes Maxwell, daughter of the laird of Munches. The marriage was at first privately contracted, probably to avoid some opposition on the part of the lady's relatives. But Mr. Maxwell, who was unwilling to innovate on the usual practice of the Church, submitted himself to reproof, and had his marriage solemnized in the ordinary form. The minute of the kirk-session of Buittle in relation to the affair is not without interest:—

Buittle Manse, February 24, 1770.—Post Preces, sederunt—Minister and Elders met *in hunc effectum*. John Maxwell of Terrachty and Mistris Agnes Maxwell of Munches called and compeared, and being asked, acknowledged themselves married; but not producing legal vouchers of their marriage, they submitted to censure, and solemnly promising all fidelity to one another as husband and wife, they were formally married by the Moderator; after which they paid their fine to the Session, and all other dues genteelly, and were absolved.

In 1793, Mrs. Agnes Maxwell succeeded her brother, George Maxwell, in the lands of Munches and Dinwoodie, which she afterwards conveyed to her husband. She died childless in 1809, at the age of ninety. In 1813 Mr. Maxwell executed an entail of his

several estates in favour of his children. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Alexander Herries Maxwell, who practised as a physician in the metropolis. On his monument in St. Michael's Churchyard, Dumfries, the following inscription details his history :—

Sacred to the memory of Alexander Herries Maxwell of Munches, Esquire, who died on the 28th of June 1815, in the 71st year of his age. Benevolent, frank, social, and warm-hearted, he was a steady and sincere friend, and always ready to advance the interests of those who had any claim to his good offices. After a residence of thirty-six years in London, he relinquished the medical profession, in which he had been indefatigable, and retiring to the vicinity of his native town, he devoted the remainder of his days to the exercise of his accustomed hospitality, the pursuit of agriculture, and the promotion of every plan for the improvement of the country. Thus was his life extensively useful and his death most deeply lamented.

Mr. Alexander Herries Maxwell of Terraughty and Munches married, first, Charlotte, daughter of James Douglas, M.D., son of William Douglas of Kelhead, by whom he had an only child, Charlotte, who died young. He married, secondly, Marion, eldest daughter of William Gordon of Greenlaw, relict of William Kirkpatrick of Rae-berry. She died childless, on the 14th April 1839, at the advanced age of ninety-four.

In the lands of Munches, Dinwoodie, and Terraughty, Alexander Herries Maxwell was succeeded by his niece, Clementina Maxwell. She married in 1813 her relative, John Herries Maxwell of Barn-cleugh. On her death, in 1858, she was succeeded by her son, Wellwood Herries Maxwell of Munches.

WILLIAM MAXWELL, M.D.

THE family of Maxwell of Kirkeconnel descend from one of the older cadets of the house of Maxwell. John Maxwell of Kirkconnel founded the Abbey of Holywood in the twelfth century, and his representative, Thomas of Kirkconnel, swore fealty to Edward I. in 1296. While, at the Reformation, the majority of landowners in the southern counties embraced the Protestant doctrines, the Maxwells of Kirkconnel clung to the ancient faith; and on this account several of the members were exposed to ecclesiastical severities. James Maxwell, younger of Kirkconnel, supported the cause of Prince Charles Edward. After the battle of Culloden, he escaped to France; and, while residing at St. Germain, drew up his *Narrative of Charles, Prince of Wales' Expedition to Scotland in 1745*, which in 1841 was printed by the Maitland Club. "The 'Narrative,'" remarks the editor, "is composed with a remarkable degree of precision and taste, inasmuch as rather to appear the production of a practised *litterateur* than the work of a private gentleman, who merely aimed at giving memoranda of a series of remarkable events which he had chanced to witness." In 1750 Mr. Maxwell returned to Scotland; he continued to reside upon his estate till his death, which took place on the 23rd of July 1762, in his fifty-fourth year. In 1758 he married Mary, youngest daughter of Thomas Riddell of Swinburne Castle, with issue three sons, James, William, and Thomas. Thomas, the youngest son, died on the 1st of June 1792. The eldest son, James, succeeded to the Kirkeconnel estates, and died on the 5th of February, leaving an only child, Dorothy Mary. This lady, heiress of her father's estates, married her cousin, Robert Shawe James Witham, with issue.

William Maxwell, second son of James Maxwell of Kirkconnel,

was born in the parish of Troqueer in 1760. In his eleventh year he entered the New College of the Jesuits at Dinant, and, continuing in France, there attended the best medical schools. Having in Paris established himself as a physician, he contracted democratic opinions, and was one of the National Guards, present on the 21st January 1793 at the execution of Louis XVI. It was related of him that he dipped his handkerchief in the royal blood. Returning to Scotland in 1794, he commenced medical practice at Dumfries, and there acquired the Poet's friendship. In a letter to Mr. George Thomson, in September 1794, Burns includes the copy of an epigram, which he had addressed to Dr. Maxwell, on the recovery from fever of Miss Jessie Staig, a young lady whom, in the Poet's words, he had by his professional skill "seemingly saved from the grave." The epigram is in these lines:—

Maxwell, if merit here you crave,
That merit I deny:
You save fair Jessie from the grave!
An angel could not die.

In the autumn of 1795 Mr. John Pattison of Kelvingrove, brother of a gentleman who had been serviceable to the Poet in relation to the first Edinburgh edition of his poems, chanced to pass through Dumfries on a visit to his brother, a clergyman residing in that county. Meeting the Poet, he invited him to dinner at his hotel, and begged that he would ask his friend Dr. Maxwell to accompany him. Dr. Maxwell assented; and Mr. Pattison's son—then a lad at the grammar school—related half a century afterwards that, being one of the company, he became much impressed with the physician's ingenuity and eloquence.¹

During his last illness, the Poet experienced from Dr. Maxwell

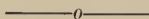
¹ Chambers's *Life and Works of Burns*, 1854, vol. iv., 173.

an unwearied attention. Dr. Currie relates that, as he felt himself dying, the Poet remarked, with a portion of his former humour, "What business has a physician to waste his time on me? I am a poor pigeon not worth plucking. Alas! I have not feathers enough to carry me to my grave." Some time afterwards, when increasing weakness satisfied him that his ailment might not be arrested in its fatal course, and that his end was near, he begged Dr. Maxwell to accept at his hands a pair of handsome Exeise pistols, which he had borne in his rides. As the kind physician remonstrated with him on parting with any portion of his little property, the Poet's face assumed the aspect of discontent, and half playfully he ejaculated, "Take the pistols, sir; for, if you don't, they'll be sure to fall into the hands of some —— rascal, even greater than yourself."

On the Poet's death, Dr. Maxwell was the first to move on behalf of his wife and children; he was in his effort joined by Mr. John Syme, also by Mr. Alexander Cunningham of Edinburgh. At this time Dr. Maxwell was in his thirty-sixth year; and as he professed an alien faith, and had renounced the family Jacobitism only to embrace revolutionary sentiments even more widely obnoxious, he laboured under no ordinary difficulties in maintaining his practice. But his professional skill overcame personal disadvantages, and he came to be recognised as one of the most accomplished physicians of his district. Retiring from medical practice, owing to feeble health, he left Dumfries in May 1834 for Greenhill, Edinburgh, the residence of his cousin, Mr. Menzies of Pitfoddels. There he died on the 13th October of the same year.

The brace of pistols, which on his death-bed was by the Poet gifted to Dr. Maxwell, now occupies a place in the Museum of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries. In connexion with their place of keeping there is a brief history, not quite uneventful. On the occasion of the

centenary of the Poet's birth, the 25th of January 1859, Dr. Gillis, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Edinburgh, presented to the Society a brace of pistols which had belonged to Dr. Maxwell, who was his personal friend, and which the Bishop believed were those which the physician had received from the Bard. When the Bishop's gift was made public, a writer in the *Illustrated London News* remarked that the Poet's pistols, given to Dr. Maxwell, were purchased in 1834 by the late Allan Cunningham, and were now in possession of his widow. This assertion induced Bishop Gillis to institute an exhaustive inquiry, with the result that both the donor of the pistols and his London censor were found to be at fault; for neither the one set nor the other proved to be that which the Poet had presented to his physician. But the actual brace of pistols presented to his friend by the dying Bard were discovered and secured by the Bishop, who was privileged to exchange them for those formerly presented to the Society.



MRS. AGNES M'LEHOSE.

ADJOINING the territory through which flows the Molendinar burn, eastward of Glasgow Cathedral, are East and West Craigs. Believed to derive their name from this locality, the Craig family at Glasgow were formerly numerous. On the 15th September 1507 John Craig was witness to a legal discharge executed at Glasgow, in connexion with a tenement at Kirkintilloch;¹ while, on the 2nd April 1521, Finlay and Andrew Craig are named as joint possessors of the

¹ *Liber Protocolorum M. Cuthberti Simonis, Notarii Publici et Scribæ Capituli Glasguensis, 1499-1513, Grampian Club, 1877, vol. ii. 216.*

lands of Carden, in the diocese of Glasgow.¹ Early in the eighteenth century, the mercantile community of Glasgow embraced many families of the name.²

Andrew Craig, who studied at the University of Glasgow,³ settled as a merchant in Glasgow about the year 1707. He espoused Mary, daughter of the Rev. James Clark, minister of the Tron Church of that city, by his first wife Mary, daughter of Captain Robert Johnston, merchant. Mr. Clark, whose daughter was grandmother of the subject of our present sketch, was not less distinguished for his pulpit eloquence than by his extreme political opinions and his decision of character. Before being in 1702 admitted minister of the Tron Church, he had served the parochial cures of Innerwick and Dirleton. He strongly opposed the Union, and having in a discourse, preached on a Fast-day appointed by the Commission of the General Assembly, summed up with the words, "Wherefore be up and valiant for the city of God," a tumult ensued. Aroused by his eloquence, the populace menaced the civic authorities, and as a body held possession of the city. Eminently pious, Mr. Clark published works on the Presbyterian government of the Church of Scotland; also various pulpit discourses. He died in 1724, about the age of sixty-four. His second wife was a daughter of Sir Robert Montgomerie, Bart., of Skermorie.⁴

To Andrew Craig and Mary Clark, spouses, were born two sons, William and Andrew. William, baptized on the 15th February 1709,⁵ was in 1737 ordained minister of Cambusnethan, and in the following year was translated to the Wynd, afterwards known as St. Andrew's Church, Glasgow. Resembling his maternal grandfather, he

¹ Rental Book of Diocese of Glasgow, Gram-pian Club, vol. i. 79.

² Parish Register of Glasgow.

³ Mr. Andrew Craig's name appears in the

⁵ Baptismal Register of Glasgow.

College Register in 1698.—*Munimenta Univ. Glasg.*, iii. 166.

⁴ *Fasts Eccl. Scot.*, ii. 11; Parish Register of Glasgow.

was remarkable for his piety, also for the eloquence and fervour of his discourses. In 1767 he published *An Essay on the Life of Jesus Christ*, which was followed by other theological works. A second edition of his two volumes of discourses appeared in 1808, with a memoir of his life. He died on the 13th January 1784. His eldest son William, by his first wife, Jean Anderson,¹ entered the Faculty of Advocates, and in 1792 was raised to the bench as Lord Craig. Of high literary culture, Lord Craig originated that literary conclave known as the "Mirror Club." He was a principal writer in the *The Mirror*, and as a contributor to *The Lounger* was chiefly instrumental in rescuing from oblivion the graceful and short-lived poet, Michael Bruce.² As a judge he was also remarkable for his rectitude, precision, and despatch; he is one of the notables included by Kay in his *Edinburgh Portraits*. His portrait was also painted by Raeburn. He died at Edinburgh, on the 8th July 1813, in his sixty-eighth year.³

Andrew, younger son of Andrew Craig, qualified himself as a physician, and practised medicine in his native city. He married a daughter of the Rev. John Maclaurin, successively minister of Luss and of the Ramshorn, now St. David's Church, Glasgow.

¹ *Fasti Eccl. Scot.*, ii. 24, 275.

² Among the Laing MSS. in the University of Edinburgh are preserved "Poems by William Craig, advocate, afterwards Lord Craig." From Lord Craig's verses "On a Cobbler," a humorous sally on Gray and Parnell, we present the following lines:—

Why should the muse, in high ambitious
verse,
Sing the stern warrior and the bloody
plain?
Why not the praise of industry rehearse,
Its heartfelt pleasure and laborious pain?
.

But now the labour of the day is done,
Nor without halfpence in his leather purse;
O, sweet reward of toil, how fairly won,
However little, got without a curse!
So home he hies him, freely to disburse
The earnings of the day in ale so brown.
He thanks kind heaven that made his lot no
worse,
Then takes his drink and lays him safely down,
Nor wants a loving wife his honest joys to
crown.

³ Brunton and Haig's *Senators of the College of Justice*, Edin. 1832, 8vo, p. 540; Kay's *Portraits*, ed. 1842, i. 302-304; Anderson's *Scottish Nation*, i. 691.

Mr. Maclaurin's ancestors have been traced to the island of Tiree. His grandfather, Daniel, left Tiree for Inveraray, and distinguished himself by restoring that town from the desolation entailed by the civil wars. His father, the Rev. John Maclaurin, minister of Kilmodan, assisted in preparing a Gaelic version of the Psalms. His younger brother, Colin, who possessed the highest mathematical genius, was in his nineteenth year chosen Professor of Mathematics at Aberdeen. The friend and correspondent of Sir Isaac Newton, he was transferred as Professor to the University of Edinburgh, and while in that city made the calculations in connexion with the Ministers' Widows Fund. Professor Colin Maclaurin's eldest son, John, after an eminent career as an advocate, was in 1788 appointed a judge by the title of Lord Dreghorn; he died on the 24th December 1796. Both Lord Dreghorn and his father were copious writers; the mathematical treatises of the latter are much celebrated.¹

The Rev. John Maclaurin, father-in-law of Mr. Andrew Craig, was author of sermons and essays; also of a work on the *Prophecies relating to the Messiah*. A discourse from his pen, "A glorying in the Cross of Christ," obtained wide acceptance. Mr. Maclaurin died on the 8th September 1784, at the age of sixty-one.

The Rev. John Maclaurin was twice married. By his first wife, Liliass, daughter of John Rae of Little Govan, he had nine children. Of these, the eldest daughter married John Finlay, writer in Glasgow, and became ancestress of the late Mr. Alexander S. Finlay of Castle Toward. The second daughter was Mrs. Craig.

Of the marriage of Mr. Andrew Craig, surgeon, and —

¹ Anderson's *Scottish Nation*, iii. 37, 38; Brunton and Haig's *Senators*, 337-338. In 1798 appeared, in two volumes 8vo, the Works of John Maclaurin, Esq. of Dreghorn, one of the Senators of the College of Justice. The first volume contains "Epigrams," the second "Thoughts on Various Subjects." Lord Dreg-

horn kept a printing-press, at which he printed poems for distribution among his friends. He composed a satire against David Hume and John Home, author of "Douglas," entitled "The Philosopher: an opera in two acts." He afterwards numbered both writers among his friends, and withdrew his pasquinade.

Maclaurin were born a son and four daughters, all of whom died in infancy, save the daughters Margaret and Agnes. Margaret, born about 1752, married, in her nineteenth year, Captain Kennedy of Kailzie, and died about a year afterwards. Agnes was born in April 1759. An extremely delicate child, she was very imperfectly instructed, while the death of her mother when she was ten years old, proved a further barrier to her judicious upbringing. She was known in childhood as "the pretty Miss Nancy," and in opening womanhood was described as eminently beautiful. Among her admirers was Mr. James M'Lehose, a young lawyer in the city, who, disappointed in procuring an introduction to her, fell upon a stratagem in order to form her acquaintance. Learning that she was to be sent to Edinburgh to a boarding-school, he ascertained the time of her departure, and engaged all the seats in the interior of the stage-coach, excepting the one which had been secured to her. The journey occupied a whole day, and Mr. M'Lehose, who possessed a handsome person and a most insinuating address, improved the opportunity which he had purchased. Fascinated by his demeanour, Miss Craig allowed him to understand that his attentions were not disagreeable to her.¹ On her return from Edinburgh, six months afterwards, Mr. M'Lehose followed up his suit. Remarking her predilection, Miss Craig's relatives entreated that she would not rashly form an engagement, but to their counsels she preferred her own judgment. She accepted Mr. M'Lehose's offer of marriage, and at the early age of seventeen became his wife. In the parish register of Glasgow the marriage is recorded in these words:—"1776, *July*.—James M'Elhose, writer in Glasgow, and Agnes Craig, residing there, regularly married the 1st inst."

Under ordinary circumstances, the union might have proved a

¹ Collected Works of Rev. John Maclaurin. Preface by Rev. Dr. Gould. Edinb. 1860, 2 vols. 12mo.

happy one. Mr. M'Lehose seems to have had a satisfactory business connexion; he was only five years senior to his wife, and each party had been influenced solely by affection. But the pleasant manners which Mr. M'Lehose assumed as a lover were not to be recognised in the husband. He objected to his wife's social tendencies, repelled her conversational powers, which were of a high order, and chided her vivacity. At length he professed jealousy, and became cruel. In a statement prepared for her friends, Mrs. M'Lehose afterwards wrote:—

Only a short time had elapsed ere I perceived, with inexpressible regret, that our dispositions, tempers, and sentiments were so totally different as to banish all hopes of happiness. Our disagreements rose to such a height, and my husband's treatment was so harsh, that it was thought advisable by my friends a separation should take place, which accordingly followed in December 1780.

Mrs. M'Lehose had lost her first-born. Two children were brought with her at the separation; not long after that event a fourth was born. By the law of Scotland the father is entitled to the custody of his infants, and that which the law allowed Mr. M'Lehose vigorously enforced. Mrs. M'Lehose was deprived of her three children, two of whom were boarded with her husband's relatives, the youngest being entrusted to a nurse. Bereaved and desolate, she found shelter under her father's roof, and that gentleman hastened to execute a settlement which would prevent the possibility of her being left destitute, or at the mercy of her husband. This settlement is dated the 10th January 1781; it became operative after a brief interval, for Mr. Craig died in the following year. By his settlement he constituted his daughter as his executrix, investing her in his entire estate, heritable and personal. The whole consisted of "the second storey of a tenement on the east side of the Trongate, of household effects, and of a sum of £50 in Moore, Carrick, & Co.'s Bank." John Craig, son of

Mrs. M'Lehose's father's brother, the Rev. William Craig, became cautioner to the administration.¹

Mr. M'Lehose had become reckless and dissipated, while his father-in-law's settlement showed him that his hope of relieving himself from his obligations through his wife's means must be finally abandoned. In the year 1782 he resolved to leave the country, and, learning that his wife had removed to Edinburgh, he proceeded thither, and by a missive, couched in affectionate terms, begged an interview. The proposal was rejected, and in a letter addressed to her from London, he bitterly reproached her, and asked her to proceed to Glasgow, and receive under her protection their three children, as, he added, "none of my friends will have anything to do with them."

The narrative may be continued in Mrs. M'Lehose's own words:—

The income left me by my father being barely sufficient to board myself, I was now distressed how to support my three infants. With my spirits sunk in deep dejection, I went to Glasgow to see them. I found arrears due for their board. These I paid, and, the goodness of some worthy gentlemen in Glasgow procuring me a small annuity from the Writers, and one from the Surgeons,² I again set out for Edinburgh with them in August 1782; and by the strictest economy made my little income go as far as possible. The deficiency was always supplied by some worthy benevolent friends, whose kindness no time can erase from my grateful heart.

Among Mrs. M'Lehose's prominent benefactors was Mr. William Craig, afterwards Lord Craig, her cousin-german. This excellent man befriended his relative from the first, and when she was deprived of her annuities on the ground that her husband's success in Jamaica enabled him to support his children, Lord Craig supplied

¹ Glasgow Com. Reg., vol. lxix. pp. 47, 48.

² The annuity from the Society of Writers was £10; that from the Surgeons, £8.

the deficiency. Through his beneficence she was with her children duly cared for, while he rendered accessible to her the best literary society. At his death in 1813, it was found that she was made an annuitant, and her son his lordship's residuary legatee. While Mrs. M'Lehose was thus generously upheld by one kinsman, another, John Maclaurin, Lord Dreghorn, was cold and silent. For the worse than widowed daughter of his cousin-german his lordship had not even the language of compassion. Respecting him Mrs. M'Lehose wrote to the Poet: "He used me in a manner unfeeling,—harsh beyond description, at one of the darkest periods of my chequered life."

At Edinburgh Mrs. M'Lehose rented a small dwelling, being the first floor of a tenement in a court at the back of General's Entry, Potterrow; her rooms were low-roofed, and, having very small windows, were imperfectly lighted. Her early education being circumscribed, she now blended the instruction of her children with personal culture. She studied the best authors. At length she acquired a correct style, and composed in prose and verse with power and elegance. Mrs. M'Lehose and the Poet first met about the 4th December 1787, at a little tea-drinking given by Miss Chalmers's friend, Miss Nimmo, at her house in Alison Square. With respect to the mutual impression produced at this meeting we are not uninformed. "Of all God's creatures," wrote the Poet, "I ever could approach in the beaten way of friendship, you struck me with the deepest, the strongest, the most permanent impression." To the Poet's letter containing these words Mrs. M'Lehose warmly replied: "Miss Nimmo can tell you how earnestly I had long pressed her to make us acquainted. I had a presentiment that we would derive pleasure from the society of each other."

That two persons constituted as were Robert Burns and Agnes M'Lehose should have been mutually attracted, was almost inevitable. Born in the same year, they seemed, in the language of astrology, to

have entered life under something of the same planetary influence. Each discoursed eloquently and with feeling, each loved literary correspondence and cherished the Muse, and in each was the possession of genius mellowed by suffering.

The Poet was preparing to leave Edinburgh, but a severe accident, which happened on a day, the evening of which he had promised to spend with his new acquaintance, confined him to his lodgings. Between the invited and the inviter a correspondence ensued, which in the history of letters has become memorable. For some weeks the correspondents used their own names; but Mrs. M'Lehose fancifully adopted the name of "Clarinda," while Burns, who remarked that he loved Arcadian names, subscribed himself "Sylvander." The correspondence began on the 6th December 1787, and terminated on the 21st March 1788, continuing about three and a half months. Deeply interested in the compositions of one whose temperament much resembled his own, it was to be anticipated that the Poet would hail the acquisition of his new acquaintance with all the energy of his ardent and susceptible nature. So he did, and without trespassing beyond the bounds of that decorum which, in the peculiar relations of the parties, was most especially to be observed. On her part Clarinda evinced an early and unceasing anxiety, so that she might elevate her correspondent from what she regarded as a state of moral indifferentism into the fervour of an earnest faith. On the 1st January 1788 she wrote thus:—

Ah, my friend, Religion converts our heaviest misfortunes into blessings! I feel it to be so. Thus passions, naturally too violent for my peace, have been broken and moderated by adversity; and if even that has been unable to conquer my vivacity, what length might I not have gone, had I been permitted to glide along in the sunshine of prosperity. I should have forgot my future destination, and fixed my happiness on the fleeting shadows below. . . . My heart was formed for love, and I desire to devote it to Him who is the source of

love! Yes, we shall surely meet in an "unknown state of being," where there will be full scope for every kind, heartfelt affection—love without alloy, and without end.

Writing to the Bard on the 3rd of January, she sent him these lines :—

Talk not of Love! it gives me pain,
 For Love has been my foe :
 He bound me in an iron chain,
 And plung'd me deep in woe.

But Friendship's pure and lasting joys
 My heart was formed to prove ;
 The worthy object be of those,
 But never talk of Love.

The "Hand of Friendship" I accept,
 May Heaven be our guard !
 Virtue our intercourse direct,
 Her smiles our dear reward.

In a letter to Clarinda, also of the 3rd January, Sylvander writes :—

Your religious sentiments, madam, I revere. If you have, on some suspicious evidence from some lying oracle, learnt that I despise or ridicule so sacredly important a matter as real religion, you have, my Clarinda, much misconstrued your friend. . . . My definition of worth is short: truth and humanity respecting our fellow-creatures; reverence and humility in the presence of that Being, my Creator and Preserver, and who, I have every reason to believe, will one day be my Judge.

On the 8th January Sylvander uses these words :—

I am delighted, charming Clarinda, with your honest enthusiasm for religion. Those of either sex, but particularly the female, who are lukewarm in that most important of all things, "O my soul, come not thou into their secrets."

In the same letter the Poet refers to that part of his creed quoted elsewhere, in which he recognizes Christ as "a Guide and Saviour." On the 19th January he, in relation to a retrospect of his life, addresses his correspondent thus :—

My life reminded me of a ruined temple : what strength, what proportion in some parts ; what unsightly gaps, what prostrate ruins in others ! I kneeled down before the Father of mercies, and said, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and in Thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son."

On the evening of Sunday, the 20th January, Clarinda addresses the Bard on the doctrines of the Christian faith. She writes :—

If God had not been pleased to reveal His own Son, as our all-sufficient Saviour, what could we have done but cried for mercy, without any sure hope of obtaining it ? But when we have Him clearly announced as our Surety, our Guide, our blessed Advocate with the Father ; who, in their senses, ought to hesitate in putting their souls into the hands of this glorious "Prince of Peace ?" Without this, we may admire the Creator in His works, but we can never approach Him with the confidential tenderness of children. "I will arise and go to my Father." This is the blessed language of every one who believes and trusts in Jesus. . . . Whenever the wish is sincerely found in our hearts, our heavenly Father will have compassion upon us, "though a great way off." This is "the religion of the bosom." . . . Why should we, who know "the way, the truth, and the life," deprive ourselves of the comfort it is fitted to yield ? Let my earnest wish for your eternal as well as temporal happiness excuse the warmth with which I have unfolded what has been my own fixed point of rest.

In a letter to Clarinda, dated 21st January, Sylvander thus expresses himself :—

O Thou, whose I am and whose are all my ways ! Thou seest me here, the hapless wreck of tides and tempests in my own bosom. Do Thou direct to Thyself that ardent love for which I have so often sought a return, in vain, from my fellow-creatures ! If Thy goodness has yet such a gift in store for me, as an equal return of affection from her who, Thou knowest, is dearer to me than life, do Thou bless and hallow our bond of love and friendship ; watch

over us in all our outgoings and incomings for good, and may the tie that unites our hearts be strong and indissoluble as the thread of man's immortal life.

Replying on the 24th of January, Clarinda wrote thus:—

O Sylvander, may the friendship of that God you and I have too much neglected to secure, be henceforth our chief study and delight.

On the 27th January she used these words:—

Tell me, did you ever, or how oft have you smote on your breast and cried, God be merciful to me a sinner? I fancy once or twice, when suffering from the effects of your errors. . . . My dearest friend, there are two wishes uppermost in my breast—to see you think alike with Clarinda on religion; and to see you settled in some creditable line of business. The warm interest I take in both these is perhaps the best proof of the sincerity of my friendship, as well as the earnest of its duration.

Writing to Clarinda on the evening of Sunday, 3rd February, Sylvander proceeds:—

Did you ever meet with the following lines, spoken of Religion, *your* darling topic:—

“Tis *this*, my friend, that streaks our morning bright;
 ’Tis *this* that gilds the horror of our night!
 When wealth forsakes us, and when friends are few,
 When friends are faithless, or when foes pursue;
 ’Tis this that wards the blow, or stills the smart,
 Disarms affliction, or repels its dart;
 Within the breast bids purest rapture rise,
 Bids smiling conscience spread her cloudless skies.”

I met with these verses very early in life, and was so delighted with them, that I have them by me, copied at school.¹

It is rather a bad picture of us—wrote Clarinda on the 8th March—that we are most prone to call upon God in trouble. Ought not the daily blessings of

¹ Burns uses these lines in his correspondence with Mrs. Dunlop; he also quoted them in conversation. They are to be found in the early editions of Hervey's *Meditations*.

health, peace, competence, friends; ought not these to awaken our constant gratitude to the Giver of all? I imagine that the heart which does not occasionally glow with filial love in the hours of prosperity, can hardly hope to feel much comfort in flying to God in the time of distress. O, my dear Sylvander! that we may be enabled to set Him before us, as our witness, benefactor, and judge, at all times and on all occasions!

While this correspondence between Sylvander and Clarinda continued, the Poet visited his correspondent about ten times. One of the visits was brief, and at several strangers were present. At the other interviews the parties were alone, and had they continued in close amity there might, in view of the Poet's ardour, have been scope for the conjecture that these meetings were attended with levities. Not unhappily for their reputation, there ensued between the correspondents a temporary alienation. The Poet's marriage with Jean Armour, not long after he had described her to Mrs. M'Lehose as "perfidious," led Clarinda to charge him with deception. The communication in which she made her accusation remained unanswered, since she declined to receive any reply, except it made an acknowledgment of falsehood. But when Clarinda relented, and addressed her poetical correspondent in terms less harsh, the Bard, in a letter dated at Ellisland, 9th March 1789, answered in these words:—

I have already told you, and I again aver it, that at the period of time alluded to I was not under the smallest moral tie to Mrs. Burns; nor did I, nor could I then know, all the powerful circumstances that omnipotent necessity was busy laying in wait for me. When you call over the scenes that have passed between us, you will survey the conduct of an honest man struggling successfully with temptations, the most powerful that ever beset humanity, and preserving untainted honor in situations where the austere virtue would have forgiven a fall; situations that I will dare to say, not a single individual of all his kind, even with half his sensibility and passion, could have encountered without ruin; and I leave you to guess, madam, how such a man is likely to digest an accusation of "perfidious treachery."

The Poet, in a letter to Mrs. M'Lehose, written in February 1790, asserts that she still misconstrues him. In another, written in August 1791, he complains of his correspondent's menace to preserve his letters. In November of the same year the correspondence was renewed; and, during the Bard's visit to Edinburgh for a week subsequent to the 29th November, the parties met frequently. Complete reconciliation followed.

When Mr. M'Lehose proceeded to London in 1782, he probably intended to leave the country, but the dissipations of the metropolis attracted and overwhelmed him. At length he was thrown into a debtors' prison, and his mother and other relatives in Scotland subscribed for his liberation, on the express condition that he forthwith emigrated. He complied with the condition, and sailed for Jamaica in November 1784.

At Jamaica Mr. M'Lehose prospered, but for a time he was silent to every appeal made to him, whether by his wife or by Lord Craig, for the support of his children. At length, when informed that William, his youngest child, had died in August 1790, he enclosed to Mrs. M'Lehose a bill for £50, accompanied by the request that she would educate their surviving son "at the first boarding-school for young gentlemen," and promising punctually to defray the cost. He also gave his wife an opportunity of rejoining him in his new home. Having consulted her relatives, Mrs. M'Lehose at length resolved to comply with the invitation. From her husband's mother, whom she visited in Glasgow, she learned that, though her circumstances were straitened, he had not for three years communicated with her. And she had the further discouragement that, months after she had consented to leave Great Britain, and when she was just about to embark, she had a letter from her husband, alleging that yellow fever prevailed in the island, and that the negroes were in revolt. But she determined not to

put aside her resolution, and hence made arrangements for her voyage. In prospect of her departure, she had a final interview with the Poet. This took place on the 6th December 1791, and on the 27th of the same month the Poet despatched to her three sets of verses in allusion to the contemplated separation. Among these was his well-known song beginning, "Ae fond kiss, and then we sever."

Before sailing Mrs. M'Lehose communicated with the Poet in an earnest strain. In a letter to him, dated Edinburgh, 25th January 1792, she writes:—

Now, my dearest sir, I have a few things to say to you, as the last advice of her who could have lived or died with you! I am happy to know of your applying so steadily to the business you have engaged in; but O, remember this life is a short passing scene! Seek God's favour—keep His commandments—be solicitous to prepare for a happy eternity! Then, I trust, we shall meet in perfect and never-ending bliss. Read my former letters attentively; let the religious tenets there expressed sink deep into your mind; meditate on them with candour, and your accurate judgment must be convinced that they accord with the words of Eternal Truth. Laugh no more at holy things or holy men: remember that "without holiness no man shall see God." . . . So it was the *Roselle* you were to have gone in! I read your letter to-day, and reflected deeply on the ways of Heaven. To us they oft appear dark and doubtful; but let us do our duty faithfully, and sooner or later we shall have our reward, because "the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." . . . And now adieu! May Almighty God bless you and yours! take you into His blessed favour here, and afterwards receive you into His glory.

In February 1792 Mrs. M'Lehose sailed from Leith in the *Roselle*, the vessel in which the Poet intended to have sailed for Jamaica six years previously. It arrived at Kingston in April, but Mr. M'Lehose allowed some time to elapse before he entered an appearance. He received his wife coldly, but, though his demeanour became less repellent, Mrs. M'Lehose could not regard with com-

placency his harsh treatment of his slaves—still less his owning himself father of children by a coloured mistress. She also suffered personally from the climate. So, parting with her husband amicably, after a three months' visit, she re-embarked on board the *Roselle*, and in August reached Edinburgh.

Mr. M'Lehose handed to his wife at parting the sum of twenty guineas, but the expenses incurred for his son's board he did not liquidate according to his promise. In a suit which she raised against him in the Court of Session, Mrs. M'Lehose obtained, in March 1797, a judgment allowing her a yearly aliment of £100, but the decree, owing to her husband's absence from the Court's jurisdiction, proved ineffectual. Mr. M'Lehose survived till March 1812. For many years, as Chief Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas in Jamaica, he enjoyed a large income, yet no portion of it was received by the members of his family. But a balance of several hundred pounds which belonged to him in the hands of Messrs. Coutts, the London bankers, was happily received after his decease.

In affectionate remembrance of Mrs. M'Lehose, the Poet composed in the summer after her departure his song "My Nannie's awa'," and about the same time he produced his song "Wandering Willie," as an expression of his friend's feelings on being reunited with her husband. After Mrs. M'Lehose returned to Scotland, he repeatedly made inquiries as to her welfare through Miss Mary Peacock, more especially in a letter written on the 6th December, the anniversary of his last meeting with her. In March 1793 he sent her a copy of a new edition of his poems, and therewith a characteristic letter. To this letter she made answer, but her communication has not been preserved. A further letter from the Poet, addressed to her from Castle Douglas on the 25th June 1794, congratulates her on restored health, and asserts the writer's deep interest in her welfare.

After a period, Mrs. M'Lehose quitted her dwelling in the Potterrow for a house in the Calton, more befitting her position. She was much in society, her animated and intelligent conversation rendering her a favourite in every assembly. Among those literary persons who specially rejoiced in her intimacy were Mr. Robert Ainslie, introduced to her by Burns, Thomas Campbell, author of *The Pleasures of Hope*, Mr. James Graham, author of *The Sabbath*, and Mr. James Gray of the High School. For forty years she gave an entertainment on New Year's Day, to which an invitation was regarded as a special honour. As at the commencement, so towards the close of her career, she experienced sorrow. Her only surviving son, Mr. Andrew M'Lehose, became a Writer to the Signet, and married; he died in 1839, predeceased by his wife and two children. Chastened by the loss of all her descendants, save one, Mrs. M'Lehose latterly cherished a pensive retirement. She died on the 22nd October 1841, in her eighty-third year. A well-written memoir of her, accompanying her correspondence with the Poet, was produced in 1843 by Mr. W. C. M. M'Lehose, her surviving grandchild. He too has passed away, and the race of Clarinda is extinct.

A desire to shine in the fashionable drawing-room rather than on the printed page, has deprived Mrs. M'Lehose of that celebrity which she would certainly otherwise have enjoyed. Both in prose and verse she composed with marked effect. Her "Fugitive Verses," attached to her memoir by her grandson, are so graceful and ornate as to excite regret that she had not further indulged the poetic vein. Her stanzas commencing "Talk not of love," are embraced in nearly every edition of the Poet's works, and are in no respect inferior to verses from his own pen. Her prose is exquisite. Clarinda's letters are unrivalled in any compositions of the sort, ancient or modern. Passionate they are,—often vehemently so,—

yet from the beginning of her correspondence to its close there is not a phrase or expression which we could desire to alter or could wish unwritten. She uses phrases expressive of strong, deep attachment, but these are due to the effervescence of a fervent nature, and are wholly innocent.

Mrs. M'Lehose survived the Poet forty-five years. She never forgot him. Writing to Mr. John Syme shortly after the Poet's death, in regard to her correspondence with him, she proceeds:—

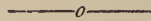
What can have impressed such an idea upon you, as that I ever conceived the most distant intention to destroy these precious memorials of an acquaintance, the recollection of which would influence me were I to live till fourscore? Be assured I will never suffer one of them to perish.

What Mrs. M'Lehose thus expressed was actually fulfilled; she lived till upwards of fourscore, and to the last cherished the Poet's memory. In her Journal, under the 25th January 1813, she writes:—"Burns's birthday. A great dinner at Oman's. Should like to be there, an invisible spectator of all said of that great genius." In another entry, dated 6th December 1831, she has the following:—"This day I can never forget. Parted with Burns in the year 1791, never more to meet in this world. Oh, may we meet in heaven!"

To the collection of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe she in old age contributed a volume which Burns had presented to her as a parting token. It was a handsome copy of Young's *Night Thoughts*, inscribed thus:—"To Mrs. M'Lehose, this poem, the sentiments of the heirs of immortality, told in the numbers of Paradise, is respectfully presented by Robert Burns."

To the verge of old age Mrs. M'Lehose was beautiful and engaging. Short in stature, her form was graceful, her hands and feet small and delicate. Her features were regular and pleasing, her

eyes lustrous, her complexion fair, her cheeks ruddy, and a well-formed mouth displayed teeth beautifully white. All who had the privilege of meeting her were charmed with her society; and it may be added that those only who have not studied her character and read her letters, will ever venture to express towards her memory a single word of censure or reproach.



JOHN M' MURDO.

ON the wall of Melrose Abbey are inscribed these lines:—

John Murdo sometime callit was I,
 And born in Parysse certainly,
 And had in keeping al mason werk
 Of Sant Androy's, ye Hye Kerk,
 Of Glasgow, Melrose, and Paslay,
 Of Nyddisdayll and of Galway.
 Pray to God and Mary baith,
 And sweet Sanct John, to keep
 This holy kirk fra scaith.

This simple memorial-stone preserves from oblivion the name of an ingenious artist whose existence would otherwise have been forgotten. On the 25th July 1565 the Commendator of Melrose granted to John M'Murdy and his heirs a charter of the lands of Cubbingtoun and Ferdinmakrery. John was succeeded by his son Robert, who in a retour, dated 27th October 1602, is served heir of his father, "John Macmurdie in Dunscore in the lands of Cubbentoun and others, now commonly known as Macmurdestoun." Of Robert's two sons, Robert and John, the latter continued the representation of the family. He had two sons, James and John, the latter of

whom was in 1702 admitted minister of Torthorwald. In 1715 the Rev. John M'Murdo, with an ardent loyalty, led his parishioners as volunteers in support of the reigning house and of the Protestant faith. Eminently pious, he was assiduous in fulfilling all the pastoral duties, but his promising career was checked by an early death; he died on the 19th November 1720, at the age of thirty-nine. He married, first, Mary Muir of Cassencarry, without issue; secondly, Alison, daughter of William Charteris of Bridgemoor, by whom he had two sons, Robert and William. William, the younger son, settled as a brewer in Dumfries, and was elected a magistrate of that burgh.¹ He died 4th April 1768. By his wife, Mary Blacklock, who died 25th September 1764, he had four sons, John, William, George, and Thomas; also six daughters, of whom Catherine, Henrietta, Jean, Susan, and Elizabeth died unmarried.² Anna married, 4th June 1770, the Rev. George Duncan, minister of Lochrutton; she died on the 20th July 1824, leaving five sons and three daughters. The sons George, William, and Robert engaged in merchandise at Liverpool; Henry was ordained minister at Ruthwell; and Thomas Tudor became one of the ministers of Dumfries. Mary, one of the daughters, married the Rev. Dr. Thomas Inglis, who succeeded her father at Lochrutton; and Christina married Mr. Walter Phillips, factor for the Earl of Mansfield,³ and whose sister Margaret was wife of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd.

James M'Murdo, elder brother of the minister of Torthorwald, succeeded to the representation of the family. His son, Robert M'Murdo of Drumgans, born in 1716, was some years chamberlain to Charles, Duke of Queensberry. He espoused, in 1740, Philadelphia, daughter of James Douglas of Dornock, who died 6th February 1754,

¹ *Fasti Eccl. Scot.* i. 602.

² Family tombstone, St. Michael's Churchyard, Dumfries.

³ *Fasti Eccl. Scot.* i. 596.

at the age of thirty-one. Mrs. M'Murdo's remains were consigned to St. Michael's Churchyard, Dumfries, where she is commemorated by a handsome monument, suitably inscribed.

Robert M'Murdo of Drumgans died on the 27th June 1766. His son John forms the principal subject of the present sketch. John M'Murdo held office as chamberlain to William, Duke of Queensberry. Resident in the Castle of Drumlanrig, he became known to Burns through the good offices of Captain Riddel. At one of their early meetings Mr. M'Murdo presented the request that the Poet would favour him with some of his unpublished verses. Gratified by the compliment, the Poet, in the course of a journey from Ellisland to Ayrshire, rested at Sanquhar, and there committed to paper some verses for transmission to Drumlanrig Castle. The verses sent were the song in praise of his wife, beginning, "Oh were I on Parnassus hill"—the conical hill of Corsincon, named in the composition and compared to Parnassus, being right in front of him as he journeyed. The Poet accompanied his song with the following letter :—

SANQUHAR, 26th November 1788.

SIR,—I write you this and the enclosed, literally *en passant*, for I am just baiting on my way to Ayrshire. I have philosophy or pride enough to support me with unwounded indifference against the neglect of my more dull superiors, the merely rank and file of noblesse and gentry—nay, even to keep my vanity quite sober under the larding of their compliments; but from those who are equally distinguished by their rank and character—those who bear the true elegant impressions of the Great Creator on the richest materials—their little notices and attentions are to me amongst the first of earthly enjoyments. The honor thou didst my fugitive pieces in requesting copies of them is so highly flattering to my feelings and poetic ambition, that I could not resist even this half opportunity of scrawling off for you the enclosed, as a small but honest testimony how truly and gratefully I have the honor to be, sir, your deeply obliged humble servant.

In recognition of his politeness, Mr. M'Murdo presented the Poet, the following New Year's Day, with a Highland wedder. In acknowledging the gift Burns transmitted to the donor another MS. song. A letter therewith sent, dated 9th January 1789, he concludes in these words :—

With—not the compliments, but—the best wishes, the sincerest prayer of the season for you, that you may see many happy years with Mrs. M'Murdo and your family—two blessings, by the by, to which your rank does not entitle you, a loving wife and fine family being almost the only good things of this life to which the farm-house and cottage have an exclusive right.

Mrs. M'Murdo, in whose praise the Poet expresses himself so emphatically, was originally known as Jane Blair, her father being Provost Blair of Dumfries. Her sister was wife of Colonel de Peyster, who commanded the Dumfries Volunteers, and was also one of the Poet's friends. To Mrs. M'Murdo Burns addressed a letter, which is dated Ellisland, 2nd May 1789. In this communication he writes thus :—

You cannot easily imagine what thin-skinned animals, what sensitive plants poor Poets are. How we shrink into the embittered corner of self-abasement when neglected or contemned by those to whom we look up! and how do we, in erect importance, add another cubit to our stature on being noticed and applauded by those whom we honor and respect! My late visit to Drumlanrig has, I can tell you, madam, given me a balloon-waft up Parnassus, where, on my fancied elevation, I regard my poetic self with no small degree of complacency. Surely, with all their sins, the rhyming tribe are not ungrateful creatures. I recollect your goodness to your humble guest—I see Mr. M'Murdo adding, to the politeness of the gentleman, the kindness of a friend, and my heart swells as it would burst, with warm emotions and ardent wishes! It may be it is not gratitude, at least it may be a mixed sensation. That strange, shifting, doubling animal man is so generally at best but a negative, often a worthless creature, that one cannot see real goodness and native worth without feeling the bosom glow with sympathetic approbation.

The Poet subscribes himself his correspondent's "obliged and grateful humble servant."

A contest for the Parliamentary representation of the Dumfries Burghs had been agitating the county for many months, Mr. M'Murdo vigorously supporting the Whig side, espoused by his constituent the Duke of Queensberry. Burns embraced the opportunity of celebrating his friends in his "Election Ballad" thus:—

M'Murdo and his lovely spouse
 (Th' enamour'd laurels kiss her brows !)
 Led on the Loves and Graces :
 She won each gaping burgess heart,
 While he, all-conquering, played his part
 Among their wives and lasses.

When, in December 1791, the Poet left Ellisland for Dumfries, Mr. M'Murdo opened the way to his social comfort by preceding his advent with some friendly letters. Among those addressed by him was his relative Anne M'Murdo's husband, the Rev. George Duncan of Lochrutton. From this reverend gentleman, whose manse was situated about six miles to the south-west of Dumfries, the Poet experienced much kindness and hospitality. About thirty years ago the present writer was informed by the late Dr. Thomas Tudor Duncan of Dumfries, a younger son of the minister of Lochrutton, as to the interest excited in his early home by the Poet's visits. Our informant was sixteen, and his brother Henry two years older, when, in 1793, Burns paid his first visit to their father's manse. And he remembered his father's words to them. "Look well, boys, at Mr. Burns, for you'll never again see so great a genius." Obeying the paternal counsel, they gazed earnestly at their visitor, till from the survey of his features they were diverted by the power and brilliancy of his conversation.

The Poet's Edinburgh edition was reprinted in 1793, in two volumes. A set reached Mr. M'Murdo, with this inscription :—

DUMFRIES, *March* 1793.

Will Mr. M'Murdo do me the favor to accept of these volumes? a trifling but sincere mark of the very high respect I bear for his worth as a man, his manners as a gentleman, and his kindness as a friend. However inferior, now or afterwards, I may rank as a poet, one honest virtue, to which few poets can pretend, I trust I shall ever claim as mine—to no man, whatever his station in life, or his power to serve me, have I ever paid a compliment at the expense of TRUTH.—THE AUTHOR.

During the summer of 1793 Mr. M'Murdo quitted Drumlanrig, and, with a view probably to educational facilities, established his residence in the vicinity of Dumfries. At his new home the Poet waited on him, and during his visit inscribed with his diamond on a window-pane these lines :—

Blest be M'Murdo to his latest day !
 No envious cloud o'ercast his evening ray ;
 No wrinkle, furrowed by the hand of care,
 Nor even sorrow add one silver hair !
 O may no son the father's honor stain,
 Nor ever daughter give the mother pain !

A month or two later the Poet, reduced to pecuniary straits, requested from Mr. M'Murdo a loan of “three or four guineas ;” his correspondent sent him six guineas, which he repaid in December, with the remark :—

I have owed you money longer than ever I owed it to any man, . . . and now I don't owe a shilling to man or woman either. . . . Independent of the obligations your hospitality has laid me under, the consciousness of your superiority in the rank of man and gentleman of itself was fully as much as I could ever make head against, but to owe you money too, was more than I could face.

In the same packet the Poet sent Mr. M'Murdo in loan "a Collection of Songs" composed by members of the Crochallan Club.

Mr. M'Murdo died at Bath on the 4th December 1803, at the age of sixty. By his wife he was long survived; she died on the 19th April 1836, aged eighty-eight. On the M'Murdo family tombstone in St. Michael's Churchyard, Dumfries, she is commemorated in the following inscription:—

Sacred to the memory of Jane Blair, widow of the late John M'Murdo, Esq., who departed this life on the 19th of April 1836, in her 88th year. "The memory of the just is blessed." "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," she leant upon Jesus as the Lord her righteousness and her strength, and through grace was privileged to exemplify that wisdom which cometh from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Honoured, respected, and beloved, her memorial is written on the hearts of her children. They rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, for he trusted in her.

Of the marriage of John M'Murdo and Jane Blair were born seven sons and seven daughters.

Jane, the eldest daughter, is the subject of the Poet's ballad commencing thus:—

There was a lass and she was fair,
 At kirk and market to be seen;
 When a' the fairest maids were there,
 The fairest maid was bonnie Jean.

In transmitting to Miss M'Murdo a copy of his verses in her praise, the Poet, in a letter dated July 1793, thus communicated with her in prose:—

"MADAM,—Amid the profusion of compliments and addresses, which your age, sex, and accomplishments will now bring you, permit me to approach with my *devoirs*, which however deficient may be their consequence in other respects, have the double novelty and merit, in these frivolous hollow times, of being

poetic and sincere. In the enclosed ballad I have, I think, hit off a few outlines of your portrait. The personal charms, the purity of mind, the ingenuous *naïvété* of heart and manners in my heroine are, I flatter myself, a pretty just likeness of Miss M'Murdo in a cottage. Every composition of this kind must have a series of dramatic incidents in it, so I have had recourse to my invention to finish the rest of my ballad. So much from the poet. Now let me add a few wishes, which every man who has himself the honor of being a father must breathe, when he sees female youth, beauty, and innocence about to enter into this chequered and very precarious world. May you, my young madam, escape that frivolity which threatens universally to pervade the minds and manners of fashionable life, though it may pass by the rougher and more degenerate sex. The mob of fashionable female youth, what are they? are they anything? They prattle, laugh, sing, dance, finger a lesson, or perhaps turn over the parts of a fashionable novel, but are their minds stored with any information worthy of the noble powers of reason and judgment? or do their hearts glow with sentiment, ardent, generous, or humane? Were I to poetise on the subject, I would call them butterflies of the human kind, remarkable only for, and distinguished only by, the idle variety of their ordinary glare, sillily straying from one blossoming weed to another, without a meaning and without an aim, the idiot prey of every pirate of the skies who thinks them worth his while, as he wings his way by them, and speedily by wintry time swept to that oblivion whence they might as well have never appeared. Amid this crowd of nothings may you, madam, be something—may yours be a character dignified; a rational and immortal being.

Jane M'Murdo was born on the 13th September 1777. She married, 4th October 1799, John Innes Crawford of Bellfield; she died about the year 1839, without issue.

Philadelphia Barbara, second daughter, is the subject of at least four of the Poet's songs, of which the most popular is that entitled "Phillis the Queen o' the Fair." It was composed, the Poet informs us, out of compliment to Mr. Stephen Clarke, the musical editor of Johnson's *Museum*, who had been engaged to give musical lessons to Mr. M'Murdo's daughters. Miss Philadelphia M'Murdo was celebrated as a beauty; she was born 11th March 1779, and

married, 3rd January 1806, Norman Lockhart of Tarbrax, a member of the house of Lee and Carnwath. She had fourteen children, and died 5th September 1825.

The other daughters of John M'Murdo were—Mary Veitch, born 4th June 1782; Barbara Douglas, born 5th September 1783; Rebecca Charlotte Melville, born 20th June 1788; Ann, born 15th July 1790; and Arentina Schuyler de Peyster, born 5th April 1794.

Mr. M'Murdo's sons were Robert, born 25th April 1771; Bryce Blair, born 18th April 1773; Archibald, born 9th March 1775; Douglas Veitch, born 18th February 1781; John, born 28th February 1785; Charles, born 24th May 1786; and William Ferguson, born 9th August 1791.

Archibald, the third son, served as major in the 27th Regiment of Foot. On retiring from the army, he was appointed colonel of the Dumfriesshire Militia. He died at Dumfries on the 11th October 1829, at the age of fifty-four. His remains were consigned to the family burying-place in St. Michael's Churchyard, where he and his wife, also a daughter, who died young, are commemorated on a family tombstone.

Colonel Archibald M'Murdo married Catherine Martha Wilson, with issue six sons and six daughters. John James, the eldest son, born in 1815, became an officer in the Indian army, and latterly served as colonel of the Dumfriesshire Militia; he died in 1868. Archibald William, second son, a Vice-Admiral in the Royal Navy, accompanied Bach and Ross in their Arctic and Antarctic expeditions.

Montagu, a younger son of Colonel Archibald M'Murdo, is a general in the army. When the Volunteer movement of 1859 assumed a national and permanent character, he was appointed Inspector-General of the Force, and his important service in this connexion was afterwards acknowledged by his receiving a public testimonial.

PATRICK MILLER OF DALSWINTON.

PATRICK MILLER, third son of William Miller, Writer to the Signet, and grandson of Matthew Miller of Glenlee and Barskimming, in the county of Ayr, was born at Glasgow in 1731. Thomas, his father's second son, born 3rd November 1717, was called to the Scottish Bar in 1742, and was appointed Lord Advocate in 1760. In 1761 he was elected M.P. for the burgh of Dumfries, and in 1766 was advanced to the legal dignity of Lord Justice Clerk. At first he assumed the judicial title of Lord Barskimming, afterwards that of Lord Glenlee. He was in 1788 created a baronet, and raised to the office of Lord President. He died in 1789. His son, William, second baronet, was a judge by the title of Lord Glenlee. The baronetcy is now represented by Sir William Frederick Miller, the fifth baronet.

Embracing the nautical profession, Patrick Miller visited in connexion with the merchant service various parts of the world. He afterwards settled as a banker in Edinburgh, and largely prospered. Purchasing the lands of Dalswinton in the valley of the Nith, he acquired the important status of a country landowner. Elected deputy chairman of the Bank of Scotland, he succeeded in placing the institution on a substantial basis.

Eager in extending his patronage to persons of merit, Mr. Miller hailed Robert Burns on his arrival in the capital. The first monetary donation which the Bard received in compliment to his genius proceeded from his hand. The Poet alludes to his liberality in a letter to Mr. Ballantine of Ayr, dated the 13th December 1786. Therein he writes:—

An unknown hand left ten guineas for the Ayrshire bard with Mr. Sibbald, which I got. I since have discovered my generous unknown friend to be

Patrick Miller, Esq., brother to the Justice Clerk, and drank a glass of claret with him by invitation at his own house yesternight.

The estate which Mr. Miller had acquired possesses an historic interest. Within the old castle of Dalswinton had resided Sir John Comyn, the Scottish regent, and the structure was reduced to ruin by King Robert the Bruce, after his slaughter of its proud occupant. Burns had gone to Edinburgh with a view to obtaining employment in the Excise, but Mr. Miller, fired with the notion of further connecting his lands with another person of eminence, encouraged him to rent a farm on his estate. Writing to Mr. Ballantine on the 14th January 1787, the Poet remarks :—

My generous friend Mr. Patrick Miller has been talking with me about a lease of some farm or other on an estate called Dalswinton, which he has lately bought near Dumfries. Some life-rented embittering recollections whisper me that I will be happier anywhere than in my old neighbourhood, but Mr. Miller is no judge of land ; and though I daresay he means to favour me, yet he may give me, in his opinion, an advantageous bargain that may ruin me. I am to take a tour by Dumfries as I return, and have promised to meet Mr. Miller on his lands some time in May.

Dalswinton estate presented soil of two sorts. There was some fine holm-land which adjoined the river, and a series of gravelly terraces ascending towards the hills, and partially clothed with plantations. But the entire lands, hill and holm, were out of heart, and so they appeared both to owner and prospective tenant, as, during the first week of June 1787, they together walked over the estate. They parted under promise that they would have a further meeting upon the soil about the end of August. That meeting did not ensue. On the 28th of September the Poet communicated with Mr. Miller in these terms :—

SIR,—I have been on a tour through the Highlands, and arrived in town but the other day, so could not wait on you at Dalswinton about the latter end

of August, as I had promised and intended. Independent of any views of future connections, what I owe you for the past, as a friend and benefactor, when friends I had few and benefactors I had none, strongly in my bosom prohibits the most distant instance of ungrateful disrespect. I am informed you do not come to town for a month still, and within that time I shall certainly wait on you, as by this time I suppose you will have settled your scheme with respect to your farms.

The Poet concludes a postscript to his letter in these words:—

As I am determined not to leave Edinburgh till I wind up my matters with Mr. Creech, which I am afraid will be a tedious business, should I unfortunately miss you at Dalswinton, perhaps your factor will be able to inform me of your intentions with respect to the Ellisland farm, which will save me a jaunt to Edinburgh again. There is something so suspicious in the professions of attachment from a little man to a great man, that I know not how to do justice to the grateful warmth of my heart, when I would say how truly I am interested in the welfare of your little troop of angels, and how much I have the honor to be again, sir, your obliged humble servant.

Meanwhile the Poet proceeded to Perthshire, there to fulfil some visits to which he had pledged himself. Returning to Edinburgh, he communicated with Mr. Miller in these terms:—

EDINBURGH, 20th October 1787.

SIR,—I was spending a few days at Sir William Murray's, Ochtertyre, and did not get your obliging letter till to-day I came to town. I was still more unlucky in catching a miserable cold, for which the medical gentlemen have ordered me into close confinement "under pain of death"—the severest of penalties. In two or three days, if I get better, and if I hear at your lodgings that you are still at Dalswinton, I will take a ride to Dumfries directly. From something in your last, I would wish to explain my idea of being your tenant. I want to be a farmer in a small farm, about a ploughgang,¹ in a pleasant

¹ The Poet's idea of being able to support himself on a farm of forty Scottish acres was sufficiently modest. But it must be remem-

bered that he was still unmarried, and that his only notion of housekeeping had been derived from his experiences at Lochlea and Mossiel.

country, under the auspices of a good landlord. I have no foolish notion of being a tenant on easier terms than another. To find a farm where one can live at all is not easy,—I only mean living soberly, like an old-style farmer, and joining personal industry. The banks of the Nith are as sweet, poetic ground as any I ever saw; and besides, sir, 'tis but justice to the feelings of my own heart, and the opinions of my best friends, to say that I would wish to call you landlord sooner than any landed gentleman I know. These are my views and wishes; and in whatever way you think best to lay out your farms, I shall be happy to rent one of them. I shall certainly be able to ride to Dalswinton about the middle of next week, if I hear that you are not gone.

Before the end of autumn the Poet revisited Dalswinton; and entertaining generally Mr. Miller's proposals, he in the following February made a further inspection of the soil, accompanied by a skilful agriculturist, his early and attached friend, Mr. Tennant at Glenconner.

In examining the lands, Burns and Mr. Tennant were attended by Mr. Miller's land-steward, John Cunningham, whose sons, Allan and Thomas Mounsey, were destined to excel as sweet and vigorous poets, and the former to become one of the Bard's biographers. Three farms were severally gone over, each being placed in the Poet's offer—Foregirth, a wheat-producing haugh; Bankhead, also considerably productive; and the farm of Ellisland, pleasantly lying on the south or right bank of the Nith. From the outset Burns preferred Ellisland, chiefly in respect of its eligible situation. It embraced upwards of one hundred acres—part holm and part croft land, the former adapted for wheat, the latter suited for potatoes and corn. But every portion of the ground, as of the other farms on the estate, was in a wretched state of exhaustion, and fit only to be reclaimed under the skill and management and liberal expenditure of experienced husbandmen.¹

¹ Writing on the 24th September 1810, Mr. Miller remarks: "When I purchased this estate, about five-and-twenty years ago, I had not seen it. It was in the most miserable state

Fully cognizant of the neglected condition of the soil, Mr. Miller arranged with the Poet on terms which seemed not unreasonable. He granted a lease of seventy-six years, at a rent of fifty pounds for the first three years, and seventy for the remainder ; agreeing further to give his tenant three hundred pounds to build a new farm-steading and enclose the fields. He also reserved to himself a right to plant a belt of two acres to shelter the farm on the north-west, and a precipitous bank which overhung the river.

A practical mechanician, Mr. Miller had, in the year 1785, commenced a series of experiments in naval architecture and the propulsion of vessels, which subsequently rendered him conspicuous. In 1786 he constructed a vessel with five masts, fitted up with paddle-wheels, which, armed with carronades,—or guns with chambers, also of his invention,—he offered to the Government of the day, and on their declination presented to Gustavus III. of Sweden. In acknowledgment, he received from the King an autograph letter, accompanied by a gold box which contained a packet of turnip-seed, from which sprung the first Swedish turnips grown in this country.

While negotiating with the Poet as to his becoming a tenant on his estate, Mr. Miller was actively pushing forward his naval inventions. In February 1787 he printed at Edinburgh a folio pamphlet,¹ containing a description and drawings of a triple vessel, propelled either by sails, or by paddle-wheels, revolving in the channels between the vessel's three hulls,—the wheels being driven by capstans, and worked by manual labour. But Mr. Miller's pamphlet is chiefly remarkable as containing the following sentence:—"I have also

of exhaustion, and all the tenants in poverty. Judge of the first, when I inform you that oats ready to be cut were sold at 25s. per acre, upon the holm grounds. When I went to view my purchase, I was so much disgusted for eight or ten days, that I then meant never to return to

this country."—*General View of the Agriculture of Dumfriesshire*, 8vo, Edin. 1812.

¹ Mr. Miller's pamphlet is entitled, *The Elevation, Section, Plan, and Views of a Triple Vessel, and of Wheels, with Explanations*, folio, pp. 13.

reason to believe that the power of the steam-engine may be applied to work the wheels, so as to give them a quicker motion, and consequently to increase that of the ship." For the suggestion as to the application of the steam-engine, Mr. Miller was indebted to Mr. James Taylor, an accomplished scientist, who, in 1785, became tutor to two of his sons, and afterwards assisted him in his experiments. But Mr. Miller was considerably wedded to his own method of propelling his wheels by cranks wrought with hand labour. In experimenting he was much hampered by a law then in force, which regulated the proportion of breadth to length in merchant vessels, and so prevented his adopting a suitable proportion. In a communication to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, dated 5th December 1787, he detailed the experiments he had on the 2nd day of June preceding made in a twin or double vessel in the Firth of Forth. This vessel he described as sixty feet long and fourteen and a half feet broad, with one paddle-wheel, which, when driven by five men at the capstan, propelled at a speed of from three and a half to four and a half miles an hour.

In 1788 Mr. Miller engaged William Symington, a mechanical engineer, employed at the Wanlockhead lead mines, to make a steam-engine capable of driving the two paddle-wheels of a double pleasure-boat, which he had provided on Dalswinton Loch. The engine being duly fitted, an experiment was made in October, when the boat was propelled at five miles an hour. The small steam-engine used on the occasion is preserved in the Andersonian Museum at Glasgow.

Encouraged by the approval of his friends, Mr. Miller purchased one of the boats used upon the Forth and Clyde Canal, and employed the Carron Iron Company to construct a steam-engine on the plan devised by Symington. On the 26th December the new steamer tugged a heavy load on the canal at the speed of seven

miles an hour. Had his energetic measures continued, it is not uncertain that Mr. Miller would have become permanently associated with the origin of steam navigation. But of a sudden he abandoned his experiments. In a letter to Mr. Taylor he stated that he had become satisfied that "Symington's steam-engine was the most improper of all steam-engines for giving motion to a vessel." This opinion was well founded, for in Symington's original engine the motion was communicated from the pistons to the revolving shafts by a combination of chains, pulleys, and ratchet wheels, which produced a jerking and jarring motion, fatal alike to economy of power and to durability. But Symington persevered, and, adopting Watt's double-acting engine, with its crank to the paddle-wheel, produced in 1801 the first practical steamboat, the *Charlotte Dundas*.

Mr. Miller's well-intentioned experiment of providing on his estate for the national Poet was not more fortunate than his effort in improving navigation. From the outset Ellisland farm had proved to the new tenant an incubus and a snare. The land required a process of enrichment he was unable to provide, and a skilful application of resources which it was not in his power to supply. Entering the farm in June 1788, he finally quitted the occupancy in December 1791. Prior to October of the latter year Mr. Miller became purchaser of the lease. Of this we are informed by the Poet in a letter which he addressed to Mr. Peter Hill. To that gentleman he writes:—

I may perhaps see you about Martinmas. I have sold to my landlord the lease of my farm, and as I roup off everything then, I have a mind to take a week's excursion to see old acquaintance. . . . Mr. Miller's kindness has been just such another as Creech's was, but this for your private ear,—

His meddling vanity, a busy fiend,
Still making work his selfish craft must mend.

In one essential respect Mr. Miller profited by the Poet's removal, for on the 19th of November 1791, his neighbour, Mr. Maine, became the purchaser of Ellisland for the sum of £2000.

With Mr. Miller the Bard continued to maintain friendly relations. When in the spring of 1793 was issued a new edition of his poems, one of the copies which he received from the publisher he presented to the laird of Dalswinton. He accompanied the gift by a letter in these terms :—

DUMFRIES, *April* 1793.

SIR,—My poems having just come out in another edition, will you do me the honor to accept of a copy? A mark of my gratitude to you, as a gentleman to whose goodness I have been much indebted; of my respect for you as a patriot, who, in a venal sliding age, stands forth the champion of the liberties of my country; and of my veneration for you, as a man whose benevolence of heart does honor to human nature. There *was* a time, sir, when I was your dependant; this language then would have been very like the vile incense of flattery—I could not have used it. Now that that connexion is at an end, do me the honor to accept of this *honest* tribute of respect from, sir, your most indebted, humble servant.

Mr. Miller continued to exercise the inventive faculty. He contrived the first drill plough used in this country; also a threshing-machine propelled by horse power, and a new plough. He also introduced the feeding of cattle on steamed potatoes. He was an ardent cultivator of fiorin grass. From the agricultural societies he received presents of two silver vases in token of appreciation and honour. Latterly he was pecuniarily involved, and his estate mortgaged. He died at Dalswinton on the 9th December 1815, at the advanced age of eighty-four. His remains were removed to Edinburgh, and there deposited in the Greyfriars Churchyard.

Patrick, Mr. Miller's eldest son, served as a captain in the army. In the Whig interest he was elected member for the Dumfries

burghs at the general election in 1790, in opposition to Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall, the former member. In the ballad of "The Five Carlines," he is by the Poet celebrated thus:—

Then next came in a sodger youth,
 And spak wi' modest grace,
 An' he wad gae to Lon'on town,
 If sae their pleasure was.

He wadna hecht¹ them courtly gifts,
 Nor meikle speech pretend ;
 But he wad hecht an honest heart,
 Wad no'er desert a friend.

Some time in the autumn of 1793, after he had composed his ode of "Scots wha hae," the Poet communicated a copy to Captain Miller, preceded by the following note:—

DEAR SIR,—The following ode is on a subject which I know you by no means regard with indifference,—

O Liberty,
 Thou mak'st the gloomy face of Nature gay,
 Giv'st beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day.

It does me so much good to meet with a man whose honest bosom glows with the generous enthusiasm, the heroic daring of liberty, that I could not forbear sending you a composition of my own on the subject, which I really think is in my best manner. I have the honor to be, dear sir, etc.²

¹ Promise.

² In connexion with this letter, bearing on the same sheet a copy of the ode of "Scots wha hae" in the Poet's handwriting, the writer may be allowed in a note to present the subsequent history. By a son of Captain Miller the sheet was presented to the celebrated Mr. Robert Wallace of Kelly, M.P., accompanied by a letter, remarking that he was the proper

custodian, as head and representative of the family to which the Scottish Patriot belonged. On Mr. Wallace's death in 1855, the MS. became the property of his brother, General Sir James Maxwell Wallace, who had it suitably framed and enclosed. When on the 24th June 1861, the National Wallace Monument was founded on the Abbey Craig, the General handed the framed autograph to the writer, as

Not long afterwards Captain Miller brought the Poet's claims under the notice of Mr. Perry of the *Morning Chronicle*, with a view to his making a literary settlement in London. Not unaware of his poetical celebrity, Mr. Perry encouraged the member for Dumfries to offer him an immediate appointment on the literary staff of his journal. To Captain Miller's letter the Poet replied in these terms :—

DUMFRIES, *November 1794.*

MY DEAR SIR,—Your offer is indeed truly generous, and most sincerely do I thank you for it; but in my present situation I find that I dare not accept it. You well know my political sentiments; and were I an insular individual, unconnected with a wife and a family of children, with the most fervid enthusiasm I would have volunteered my services. I then could and would have despised all consequences that might have ensued. My prospect in the Excise is something; at least it is, encumbered as I am with the welfare, the very existence of nearly half a score of helpless individuals—what I dare not sport with. In the meantime they are most welcome to my ode;¹ only, let them insert it as a thing they have met with by accident, and unknown to me. Nay, if Mr. Perry, whose honor, after your character of him, I cannot doubt, if he will give me an address and channel by which anything will come safe from those spies with which he may be certain that his correspondence is beset, I will now and then send him any bagatelle that I may write. In the present hurry of Europe, nothing but news and politics will be regarded; but

secretary of the Monument Committee, with a view to its being permanently exhibited in the structure. When in 1863 the writer left Stirling to reside in London, he, at the General's request, returned the MS. to his custody. General Sir James Wallace died in 1867, and not having expressed in writing any special intention as to the disposal of the autograph, it was by his executors exposed to public sale. There was considerable competition, but it fell to Mr. Robert Thallon, merchant, New York, at the price of twelve pounds. Mr. Thallon died on the 12th May 1882, and by his representatives the autograph was again brought

under the auctioneer's hammer. The present possessor is unknown.

¹ In the Library edition of Burns's Works, the editor, Mr. Scott Douglas, suggests that the ode here referred to was that composed by the Poet "for General Washington's birthday," a composition only known in part to Dr. Currie, and of which the whole was recovered in 1872.—Burns's Works, vol. iii. 194; vi. 143. Against this theory there arises the fact, which Mr. Scott Douglas seems to have forgotten, that the ode which accompanied the Poet's previous letter to Captain Miller was that of "Scots wha hae."

against the days of peace, which heaven send soon, my little assistance may perhaps fill up an idle column of a newspaper. I have long had it in my head to try my hand in the way of little prose essays, which I propose sending into the world through the medium of some newspaper; and should these be worth his while, to these Mr. Perry shall be welcome; and all my reward shall be, his treating me with his paper; which, by the bye, to anybody who has the least relish for wit, is a high treat indeed. With the most grateful esteem, I am ever, dear sir, etc.

Captain Miller represented the Dumfries burghs till the general election in 1796. He succeeded to Dalswinton on the death of his father, but the estate was afterwards sold. In a paper contributed to the *Edinburgh Philosophical Journal* of July 1825, afterwards printed separately, he claimed that his father should "be held and acknowledged as the real author of the modern system of navigation by means of steam." He died on the 26th February 1845, leaving by his wife, Matilda Cumming, three sons and two daughters.

Major William Miller, second son of Patrick Miller of Dalswinton, the Poet's friend, served in the Royal Horse Guards, and after his retirement settled in Dumfriesshire. He married, first, Jessie, second daughter of Provost Staig of Dumfries; secondly, a daughter of Sir Edward Every, of Eggington Hall, Derby, with a numerous issue. Major Miller's first wife was the recipient of several compliments from the Poet; probably the best known being the four lines in which he denied all merit to the physician for her recovery from a fever, declaring that "an angel could not die." On another occasion he thus celebrated her charms:—

To equal young Jessie, seek Scotland all over;
 To equal young Jessie, you seek it in vain:
 Grace, beauty, and elegance, fetter her lover,
 And maidenly modesty fixes the chain.

Mrs. Jessie Miller died in 1801, at the age of twenty-six.

JOHN MOORE, M.D.

AN assertion commonly made by Scottish biographical writers, that the family of which Dr. John Moore was a member derived descent from the house of Mure of Rowallan, is unsupported by evidence. In a letter to the writer, Mr. John Carrick-Moore of Corswall, grandson of Dr. Moore, remarks that "there is not the smallest ground for suspecting any connexion between the families." Moore, a modern form of the more ancient More, is an Irish surname. A Captain Charles Moore served in the siege of Londonderry in 1689. Mr. Charles Moore, a relative of this gentleman, born at Armagh about 1690, migrated to Scotland as a private tutor, and on the 24th June 1713 was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Dunfermline. By the same Presbytery he was appointed to the second charge of Culross, and on the 10th May 1715 was ordained to the charge. From Culross he was on the 19th February 1718 translated to the second charge of Stirling.¹ Attached to the evangelical section of the Church, he was an earnest and vigorous expounder of the sacred volume, though his public usefulness was marred by an eccentric manner and a peculiar utterance. After a short ministry of twenty-two years, he died in November 1736.²

Mr. Charles Moore married at Kilsyth, on the 27th October 1727, Marion Hay, daughter of John Anderson of Dowhill, merchant in Glasgow, and Lord Provost of the city. In the cause of civil and religious liberty the family of Anderson of Dowhill were conspicuous sufferers. Mrs. Moore's grandfather, John Anderson, younger of Dowhill, was, by the Government of Charles II. and James VII., subjected to much persecution. On the 28th June 1677 he was charged before the Privy Council with frequenting

¹ *Fasti. Eccl. Scot.* ii. 588, 679.

² *Ibid.* ii. 679.

conventicles, and as he admitted that his child was baptized by an indulged minister, and that he had attended field preachings, he was amerced in a penalty of £500 sterling. Refusing to make payment, he was for nearly four months imprisoned in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh; he was liberated on consenting to pay £2000 Scots. On the 25th July 1683, he was, along with a large number of other prominent and influential persons, committed to prison under a charge of rebellion. Subsequent to the Revolution, he held for eight successive years the office of Lord Provost of Glasgow; he was also elected Member of Parliament for the city.¹ By largely embarking in the Darien scheme, he materially impaired the family resources. By her marriage-contract, dated 25th October 1727, Mrs. Moore's "lands and other subjects" are named as having been disposed to her husband as tocher, but on the production of the instrument in the Commissary Court of Stirling, subsequent to his decease, it was shown that Mrs. Moore's personal estate was comprehended in an annuity of 200 marks, while Mr. Moore at the time of his marriage, also of his death, was possessed of a capital of 9000 marks.²

With a revenue derived from the proceeds of her husband's estate, in which she was liferented, and her small personal annuity, Mrs. Moore after her husband's death took up her residence in Glasgow. There she became known for her vigorous understanding, also for her benevolence and piety; but she was chiefly adorned by the domestic virtues, devoting herself to the careful instruction and religious upbringing of her young and fatherless children. She died on the 30th July 1778.

Of the marriage of Mr. Charles Moore and Marion Hay Anderson were born three sons—John; Charles, baptized 14th May

¹ Wodrow's *History of the Church*, Glasgow, 1829, 8vo., ii. 360, 387; iii. 466.

² Commissary Court Book of Stirling, Acts, vol. xxx. 54, January 1737.

1732, and who died in infancy; and Charles Barbara, born posthumously, baptized 20th May 1737, and died young; also four daughters, Jean, baptized 9th October 1728; Anne, baptized 17th February 1731; Marion, baptized 26th December 1733, married, 8th August 1785, Dr. William Porteous, minister of St George's Church, Glasgow, and died 4th March 1817, without issue; and Mary, baptized 16th March 1735.¹ One of the daughters married George Macintosh of Dunhatton, merchant, Glasgow, who introduced the manufacture of cudbear and Turkey-red dyeing into that city. Charles Macintosh, a son of the marriage, acquired celebrity as inventor of the caoutchouc raiment manufacture. Born at Glasgow on the 29th December 1766, he studied chemistry under the celebrated Dr. Black of Edinburgh, and afterwards prosperously conducted a waterproof manufactory, first at Glasgow, and latterly at Manchester. He acquired lands at Campsie, and died on the 25th July 1843, at the age of seventy-seven.

John, the eldest son, was born at Stirling, and on the 7th December 1729 was there baptized by the Rev. Alexander Hamilton, minister of the first charge of the parish.² At the High School of Glasgow, discovering a remarkable aptitude for learning, he entered upon the study of medicine at the University of that city. So early as his seventeenth year he was, by Colonel Campbell of the 54th Regiment, afterwards fifth Duke of Argyle, introduced to the hospitals in connexion with the British army in Flanders. Soon afterwards he was, on the recommendation of Dr. Middleton, Director-General of Military Hospitals, appointed by the Earl of Albemarle, colonel of the Coldstream Guards, to the office of assistant surgeon to that regiment, then quartered at Flushing. Returning to Great Britain on the conclusion of peace in 1748, he

¹ Stirling Baptismal Register.

² *Ibid.* In all the biographies, Dr. Moore is described as born in the year 1730.

prosecuted medical study in London ; and proceeding to Paris to attend the hospitals of that city, was appointed surgeon to the household of Lord Albemarle, now ambassador at the French Court. After an interval of two years, Mr. Moore returned to Glasgow to become the partner of his early friend, Dr. Gordon, an eminent medical practitioner in that city. Subsequently he became associated in the medical practice of Professor Hamilton of the University.

Though some years a married man, and the father of several children, Mr. Moore was not quite reconciled to the monotonous duties of a medical practitioner. Accordingly, when, early in 1769, his early patron, the Duke of Argyle, requested him to attend his step-son, the young Duke of Hamilton, in foreign travels, he readily accepted the charge. With the Duke, then in his fourteenth year, he proceeded to the Continent, but by the death of the young nobleman a few months afterwards the connexion was abruptly dissolved. In the following year Mr. Moore was selected to attend the brother and heir of his deceased pupil, Douglas, the eighth Duke of Hamilton. With this nobleman he remained on the Continent several years, continuing his companionship till the Duke, in 1777, attained his majority.

In 1772 Mr. Moore obtained his diploma as M.D. from the University of Glasgow. He removed his family from Glasgow to London in 1778, and in the following year published, in two octavo volumes, his *View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, and Germany*. From its vivacity and intelligence this work commanded wide acceptance, and was translated into French, German, and Italian. Encouraged by the success of his first enterprise as an author, he issued in 1781 *A View of Society and Manners in Italy*, also in two octavo volumes, but this work was received less favourably.

In the metropolis Dr. Moore had, in order to the attainment of

any considerable medical practice, settled somewhat late in life. But, in order to show that he had not abandoned his profession for literary studies, he issued in 1786 a volume entitled *Medical Sketches*, in which he discourses on several important topics relative to health and disease, illustrating his subject by pleasing details and humorous and sarcastic sketches. A correspondent of Mrs. Dunlop, he learned through that accomplished gentlewoman as to the appearance of the Ayrshire Bard. In a letter to the Poet, dated 30th December 1786, Mrs. Dunlop communicated to him some expressions in eulogy of his verses, extracted from Dr. Moore's recent letters to her, together with her assurance that a letter from the Bard would yield him satisfaction. Writing to Mrs. Dunlop on the 15th January 1787, Burns expresses his difficulty in concocting a letter to his new admirer. He writes :—

I wished to have written to Dr. Moore before I wrote to you ; but though, every day since I received yours of December 30th, the idea, the wish to write to him has constantly pressed on my thoughts, yet I could not for my soul set about it. I know his fame and character, and I am one of "the sons of little men." To write him a mere matter-of-fact affair, like a merchant's order, would be disgracing the little character I have ; and to write the author of the *View of Society and Manners* a letter of sentiment—I declare every artery runs cold at the thought. I shall try, however, to write to him to-morrow or next day. His kind interposition in my behalf I have already experienced, as a gentleman waited on me the other day, on the part of Lord Eglington, with ten guineas, by way of subscription for two copies of my next edition.

Probably within the time indicated, the Poet communicated with Dr. Moore. The letter, which is undated, proceeds thus :—

EDINBURGH, 1787.

SIR,—Mrs. Dunlop has been so kind as to send me extracts of letters she has had from you, where you do the rustic bard the honor of noticing him and his works. Those who have felt the anxieties and solitudes of authorship

can only know what pleasure it gives to be noticed in such a manner by judges of the first character. Your criticisms, sir, I receive with reverence; only I am sorry they mostly come too late; a peccant passage or two that I would certainly have altered, were gone to the press. The hope to be admired for ages is, in by far the greatest part of those even who are authors of repute, an unsubstantial dream. For my part, my first ambition was, and still my strongest wish is, to please my compeers, the rustic inmates of the hamlet, while ever-changing language and manners shall allow me to be relished and understood. I am very willing to admit that I have some poetical abilities; and as few, if any writers, either moral or poetical, are intimately acquainted with the classes of mankind among whom I have chiefly mingled, I may have seen men and manners in a different phasis from what is common, which may assist originality of thought. Still, I know very well the novelty of my character has by far the greatest share in the learned and polite notice I have lately had; and in a language where Pope and Churchill have raised the laugh, and Shenstone and Gray drawn the tear; where Thomson and Beattie have painted the landscape, and Lyttleton and Collins described the heart—I am not vain enough to hope for distinguished poetic fame.

Dr. Moore replied in these terms:—

CLIFFORD STREET, *January 23rd, 1787.*

SIR,—I have just received your letter, by which I find I have reason to complain of my friend Mrs. Dunlop, for transmitting to you extracts from my letters to her, by much too freely and too carelessly written for your perusal. I must forgive her, however, in consideration of her good intention, as you will forgive me, I hope, for the freedom I use with certain expressions, in consideration of my admiration of the poems in general. If I may judge of the author's disposition from his works, with all the other good qualities of a poet, he has not the irritable temper ascribed to that race of men by one of their own number, whom you have the happiness to resemble in ease and curious felicity of expression. Indeed, the poetical beauties, however original and brilliant and lavishly scattered, are not all I admire in your works; the love of your native country, that feeling sensibility to all the objects of humanity, and the independent spirit which breathes through the whole, give me a most favourable impression of the poet, and have made me often regret that I did not see the

poems, the certain effect of which would have been my seeing the author last summer, when I was longer in Scotland than I have been for many years.

I rejoice very sincerely at the encouragement you receive at Edinburgh, and I think you particularly fortunate in the patronage of Dr. Blair, who, I am informed, interests himself very much for you. I beg to be remembered to him; nobody can have a warmer regard for that gentleman than I have, which, independent of the worth of his character, would be kept alive by the memory of our common friend, the late Mr. George B[annatyne].

Before I received your letter, I sent, enclosed in a letter to —, a sonnet by Miss Williams, a young poetical lady, which she wrote on reading your "Mountain Daisy:" perhaps it may not displease you:—

While soon "the garden's flaunting flowers" decay
 And scattered on the earth neglected lie,
 The "Mountain Daisy," cherished by the ray
 A poet drew from heaven, shall never die.
 Ah, like that lonely flower the poet rose,
 'Mid penury's bare soil and bitter gale:
 He felt each storm that on the mountain blows,
 Nor ever knew the shelter of the vale.
 By genius in her native vigour nurst,
 On nature with impassioned look he gazed;
 Then through the cloud of adverse fortune burst
 Indignant, and in light unborrowed blazed.
 Scotia! from rude affliction shield thy Bard;
 His heaven-taught numbers Fame herself will guard.

I have been trying to add to the number of your subscribers, but find that many of my acquaintance are already among them. I have only to add that, with every sentiment of esteem, and the most cordial good wishes, I am your obedient, humble servant.

The Poet had, in the tone of Dr. Moore's letter, discovered a correspondent in perfect accordance with his heart. He found in him a Scotsman, who, in leaving his country, had not quitted her recollections, and was quick to apprehend and appreciate aught

which tended to her honour and the prosperity of the deserving of her sons. To Dr. Moore's communication he replied thus :—

EDINBURGH, 15th Feb. 1787.

REVERED SIR,—Pardon my seeming neglect in delaying so long to acknowledge the honor you have done me in your kind notice of me, January 23rd. Not many months ago I knew no other employment than following the plough, nor could boast anything higher than a distant acquaintance with a country clergyman. Mere greatness never embarrasses me ; I have nothing to ask from the great, and I do not fear their judgment ; but genius, polished by learning, and at its proper point of elevation in the eye of the world, this of late I frequently meet with, and tremble at its approach. I scorn the affectation of seeming modesty to cover self-conceit. That I have some merit I do not deny ; but I see with frequent wringings of heart, that the novelty of my character, and the honest national prejudice of my countrymen, have borne me to a height altogether untenable to my abilities. For the honor Miss Williams has done me, please, sir, return her in my name my most grateful thanks. I have more than once thought of paying her in kind, but have hitherto quitted the idea in hopeless despondency. I had never before heard of her, but the other day I got her poems, which for several reasons, some belonging to the head, and others the offspring of the heart, give me a great deal of pleasure. I have little pretensions to critic lore : there are, I think, two characteristic features in her poetry—the unfettered wild flight of native genius, and the querulous, sombre tenderness of “time-settled sorrow.”

I only know what pleases me, often without being able to tell why.

The correspondence so auspiciously begun, the genial physician actively followed up. In forming the acquaintance of Burns, he had obtained an experience in Scottish rural life altogether new. His next letter proceeds :—

CLIFFORD STREET, 28th Feb. 1787.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of the 15th gave me a great deal of pleasure. It is not surprising that you improve in correctness and taste, considering where you have been for some time past. And I dare swear there is no danger of your admitting any polish which might weaken the vigour of your native powers.

I am glad to perceive that you disdain the nauseous affectation of decrying your own merit as a poet, an affectation which is displayed with most ostentation by those who have the greatest share of self-conceit, and which only adds undeceiving falsehood to disgusting vanity. For you to deny the merit of your poems would be arraigning the fixed opinion of the public.

As the new edition of my *View of Society* is not yet ready, I have sent you the former edition, which I beg you will accept as a small mark of my esteem. It is sent by sea to the care of Creech, and along with these four volumes for yourself I have also sent my *Medical Sketches*, in one volume, for my friend, Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop. This you will be so obliging as to transmit, or, if you chance to pass soon by Dunlop, to give to her.

I am happy to hear that your subscription is so ample, and shall rejoice at every piece of good fortune that befalls you ; for you are a very great favourite in my family ; and this is a higher compliment than perhaps you are aware of. It includes almost all the professions, and is of course a proof that your writings are adapted to various tastes and situations. My youngest son, who is at Winchester school, writes to me that he is translating some stanzas of your "Hallowe'en" into Latin verse for the benefit of his comrades. This union of taste partly proceeds, no doubt, from the cement of Scottish partiality with which they are all somewhat tintured. Even your translator, who left Scotland too early in life for recollection, is not without it.—I remain, with great sincerity, your obedient servant.

The Poet read Dr. Moore's volumes, and confided to his publisher, Mr. Creech, who was about to proceed to London, a letter in acknowledgment of the gift. That letter, which Mr. Creech delivered personally, proceeds thus :—

EDINBURGH, 23rd April 1787.

I received the books, and sent the one you mentioned to Mrs. Dunlop. I am ill skilled in beating the covers of imagination for metaphors of gratitude. I thank you, sir, for the honor you have done me, and to my latest hour will warmly remember it. To be highly pleased with your book, is what I have in common with the world ; but to regard these volumes as a mark of the author's friendly esteem, is a still more supreme gratification. I leave Edinburgh in the course of ten days or a fortnight, and after a few

pilgrimages over some of the classic ground of Caledonia, Cowdenknowes, Banks of Yarrow, Tweed, etc., I shall return to my rural shades, in all likelihood never more to quit them. I have formed many intimacies and friendships here; but I am afraid they are all of too tender a construction to bear carriage a hundred and fifty miles. To the rich, the great, the fashionable, the polite, I have no equivalent to offer; and I am afraid my meteor appearance will by no means entitle me to a settled correspondence with any of you, who are the permanent lights of genius and literature. My most respectful compliments to Miss Williams. If once this tangent flight of mine were over, and I were returned to my wonted leisurely motion in my old circle, I may probably endeavour to return her poetic compliment in kind.

Four weeks after the date of the Poet's letter, he was addressed by Dr. Moore in these terms:—

CLIFFORD STREET, 23rd May 1787.

DEAR SIR,—I had the pleasure of your letter by Mr. Creech, and soon after he sent me the new edition of your poems. You seem to think it incumbent on you to send each subscriber a number of copies proportionate to his subscription money, but you may depend upon it few subscribers expect more than one copy, whatever they subscribed; I must inform you, however, that I took twelve copies for those subscribers, for whose money you were so accurate as to send me a receipt; and Lord Eglintoun told me he had sent for six copies for himself, as he wished to give five of them as presents. Some of the poems you have added in this last edition are very beautiful, particularly the "Winter Night," the "Address to Edinburgh," "Green Grow the Rashes," and the two songs immediately following, the latter of which is exquisite. By the way, I imagine you have a peculiar talent for such compositions, which you ought to indulge. No kind of poetry demands more delicacy or higher polishing. Horace is more admired on account of his Odes than all his other writings. But nothing now added is equal to your "Vision" and "Cotter's Saturday Night." In these are united fine imagery, natural and pathetic description, with sublimity of language and thought. It is evident that you already possess a great variety of expression, and command of the English language; you ought therefore to deal more sparingly for the future in the provincial dialect; why should you, by using that, limit the number of your

admirers to those who understand the Scottish, when you can extend it to all persons of taste who understand the English language? In my opinion, you should plan some larger work than any you have as yet attempted. I mean, reflect upon some proper subject, and arrange the plan in your mind, without beginning to execute any part of it till you have studied most of the best English poets, and read a little more of history. The Greek and Norman stories you can read in some abridgment, and soon become master of the most brilliant facts, which most highly delight a poetical mind. You should also, and very soon may, become master of the heathen mythology, to which there are everlasting allusions in all the poets, and which in itself is charmingly fanciful. What will require to be studied with more attention is modern history; that is, the history of France and Great Britain from the beginning of Henry VII.'s reign. I know very well you have a mind capable of attaining knowledge by a shorter process than is commonly used, and I am certain you are capable of making a better use of it when attained than is generally done. I beg you will not give yourself the trouble of writing to me when it is inconvenient, and make no apology when you do write, for having postponed it; be assured of this, however, that I shall always be happy to hear from you. I think my friend, Mr. —, told me that you had some poems in manuscript by you, of a satirical and humorous nature (in which, by the way, I think you are very strong), which your prudent friends prevailed on you to omit, particularly one called *Somebody's Confession*;¹ if you will intrust me with a sight of any of these, I will pawn my word to give no copies, and will be obliged to you for a perusal of them. I understand you intend to take a farm, and make the useful and respectable business of husbandry your chief occupation; this, I hope, will not prevent your making occasional addresses to the nine ladies who have shown you such favour, one of whom visited you in the "auld clay biggin." Virgil, before you, proved to the world that there is nothing in the business of husbandry inimical to poetry, and I sincerely hope that you may afford an example of a good poet being a successful farmer. I fear it will not be in my power to visit Scotland this season; when I do, I'll endeavour to find you out, for I heartily wish to see and converse with you. If ever your occasions call you to this place, I make no doubt of your paying me a visit, and you may depend on a very cordial welcome from this family.—I am, dear sir, your friend and obedient servant.

¹ Obviously "Holy Willie's Prayer."

The vigorous friendship of Dr. Moore moved the Poet deeply. Among his patrons were not a few who held higher rank, both socially and in the world of letters, but the London physician had in his communications so blended eulogy with criticism, and combined with his praise expressions of practical counsel, that he was by the Bard more especially accepted as his Mæcenas. Accordingly, on his brief sojourn at Mossgiel, in July and August 1787, he prepared for Dr. Moore that autobiographical sketch to which, in relation to his early history, his several biographers have been mainly indebted. That sketch commences and closes in these terms:—

MAUCHLINE, 2d August 1787.

SIR,—For some months past I have been rambling over the country, but I am now confined with some lingering complaints, originating, as I take it, in the stomach. To divert my spirits a little in this miserable fog of *ennui*, I have taken a whim to give you a history of myself. My name has made some little noise in this country; you have done me the honor to interest yourself very warmly in my behalf; and I think a faithful account of what character of a man I am, and how I came by that character, may perhaps amuse you in an idle moment. I will give you an honest narrative, though I know it will be often at my own expense; for I assure you, sir, I have, like Solomon, whose character, excepting in the trifling affair of *wisdom*, I sometimes think I resemble,—I have, I say, like him *turned my eyes to behold madness and folly*, and like him, too, frequently shaken hands with their intoxicating friendship. . . . After you have perused these pages, should you think them trifling and impertinent, I only beg leave to tell you that the poor author wrote them under some twitching qualms of conscience, arising from suspicion that he was doing what he ought not to do—a predicament he has more than once been in before.

After a considerable interval, the Poet, in a letter dated 4th January 1789, approached his London correspondent with the request that he would extend his influence in securing him the appointment of a district officer of Excise. In his letter he informs

Dr. Moore as to the profits of his Edinburgh edition, and of the mode in which these profits had been applied. He also announces his marriage, expresses dissatisfaction with the conduct of his publisher, Mr. Creech, and encloses a copy of his poetical epistle to his friend and benefactor, Mr. Graham.

Not long afterwards the Poet again communicated with the physician. His neighbour, the Rev. Edward Neilson, minister of Kirkbean, was proceeding to London, *en route* for France, on a visit to the Duke of Queensberry, and the Poet, while introducing his reverend friend, availed himself of the opportunity of evincing to his correspondent his powers of satire, by enclosing his lately composed lines denunciatory of the memory of a cruel and heartless woman, the late Mrs. Richard Oswald of Auchencruive. Dr. Moore thus acknowledged the Poet's missive :—

CLIFFORD STREET, 10th June 1789.

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for the different communications you have made me of your occasional productions in manuscript ; all of which have merit, and some of them merit of a different kind from what appears in the poems you have published. You ought carefully to preserve all your occasional productions, to correct and improve them at your leisure ; and when you can select as many of these as will make a volume, publish it either at Edinburgh or London, by subscription. On such an occasion it may be in my power, as it is very much in my inclination, to be of service to you. If I were to offer an opinion, it would be that in your future productions you should abandon the Scottish stanza and dialect, and adopt the measure and language of modern English poetry.

The stanza which you use in imitation of "Christ's Kirk on the Green," with the tiresome repetition of "that day," is fatiguing to English ears, and, I should think, not very agreeable to Scottish. All the fine satire and humour of your "Holy Fair" is lost on the English ; yet, without more trouble to yourself, you could have conveyed the whole to them. The same is true of some of your other poems. In your "Epistle to J. Smith," the stanzas, from that beginning with this line, "This life, so far's I understand," to that which ends

with "Short while it grieves," are easy, flowing, gaily philosophical, and of Horatian elegance; the language is English with a few Scottish words, and some of those so harmonious as to add to the beauty; for what poet would not prefer *gloaming* to *twilight*? I imagine that, by carefully keeping, and occasionally polishing and correcting those verses which the Muse dictates, you will, within a year or two, have another volume as large as the first ready for the press; and this without diverting you from every proper attention to the study and practice of husbandry, in which I understand you are very learned, and which I fancy you will choose to adhere to as a wife, while poetry amuses you from time to time as a mistress. The former, like a prudent wife, must not show ill-humour although you retain a sneaking kindness to this agreeable gipsy, and pay her occasional visits, which in no manner alienates your heart from your lawful spouse, but tends on the contrary to promote her interest.

Dr. Moore concludes by informing his correspondent that he had caused his publisher to send him his lately published novel of *Zeluco*, of which he requests his unbiassed judgment. In connexion with the gift, the Poet seemed to lack courtesy by delaying his acknowledgment, but when it at length came, the well-turned compliment proved more than compensatory. To his friend's work, in a letter dated 14th July 1790, Burns refers in these terms:—

I am sadly ungrateful in not returning you my thanks for your most valuable present, *Zeluco*. In fact, you are in some degree blameable for my neglect. You were pleased to express a wish for my opinion of the work, which so flattered me that nothing less would serve my overweening fancy than a formal criticism on the book. In fact, I have gravely planned a comparative view of you, Fielding, Richardson, and Smollett, in your different qualities and merits as novel-writers. This, I own, betrays my ridiculous vanity, and I may probably never bring the business to bear; but I am fond of the spirit young Elihu shows in the book of Job—"And I said, I will also declare my opinion." I have quite disfigured my copy of the book with my annotations. I never take it up, without at the same time taking my pencil, and marking with asterisms, parentheses, etc. wherever I meet with an original thought, a nervous remark on life and manners, a remarkable, well-turned period, or a character sketched with uncommon precision.

The Poet's last extant letter to Dr. Moore is dated from Ellisland, 28th February 1791. In this communication he hopefully refers to his Excise prospects, and he sends to his correspondent his ballad of "Tam o' Shanter," his "Elegy on Captain Henderson," and his verses on Queen Mary. In these words he resumes the subject of *Zeluco* :—

By the way, how much is every honest heart which has a tincture of Caledonian prejudice, obliged to you for your glorious story of Buchanan and Targe! 'Twas an unequivocal proof of your loyal gallantry of soul, giving Targe the victory. I should have been mortified to the ground if you had not.¹ I have just read over once more of many times your *Zeluco*. I marked with my pencil, as I went along, every passage that pleased me particularly above the rest, and one or two which, with humble deference, I am disposed to think unequal to the merits of the book. I have sometimes thought to transcribe these marked passages, or at least so much of them as to point where they are, and send them to you. Original strokes that strongly depict the human heart is your and Fielding's province beyond any other novelist I have ever perused. Richardson, indeed, might perhaps be excepted; but, unhappily, his *dramatis personæ* are beings of another world; and, however they may captivate the inexperienced romantic fancy of a boy or a girl, they will ever, in proportion as we have made human nature our study, dissatisfy our riper years.²

In his reply, dated 29th March 1791, Dr. Moore informs the Poet that he had already, through the Rev. Mr. Baird, obtained a copy of his "Elegy on Captain Henderson" and the printed poem on "Alloway Church." On these gems he offers a frigid criticism, and repeats his former counsel as to avoiding the Scottish dialect. He also requests his correspondent to favour him with his

¹ In Dr. Moore's novel, Buchanan represents the Lowland Puritan feeling of Scotland, and Targe the Cavalier or Highland spirit. In a conflict arising from a quarrel as to the honour of Queen Mary, Targe is victor.

² In his letter to Mrs. Dunlop of the 6th September 1789, the Poet remarks, "I have

been very busy with *Zeluco*. The Doctor is so obliging as to request my opinion on it; and I have been revolving in my mind some kind of criticisms on novel-writing, but it is a depth beyond my research. I shall, however, digest my thoughts on the subject as well as I can. *Zeluco* is a most sterling performance."

observations on *Zeluco*, and not to suppress his censure if any he had. "Trust me," he adds, "it will break no squares between us—I am not akin to the Bishop of Grenada."

Late in the summer of 1792, Dr. Moore, as medical attendant of the Earl of Lauderdale, visited Paris, and he there witnessed the insurrection of the 10th of August, the dethronement of the king, the terrible massacres of September, and the subsequent struggles up to the middle of December of that year. The result of his experiences he embodied in a work of two octavo volumes, which appeared in 1793 and 1794 with the title of *A Journal during a Residence in France*, etc. Though scarcely satisfying the curiosity of the British public, this work exhibits a strong picture of manners and feelings, and evinces much discernment and a becoming impartiality.

During the winter of 1794–95, Dr. Moore paid a long visit to Scotland, enjoying much personal intercourse with his correspondents and friends. In his letter to Mrs. Dunlop of the 12th January 1795, the Poet writes :—

You will have seen our worthy and ingenious friend the Doctor long ere this. I hope he is well, and beg to be remembered to him. I have just been reading over again, I daresay for the hundred-and-fiftieth time, his *View of Society and Manners*, and still I read it with delight. His humor is perfectly original; it is neither the humor of Addison, nor Swift, nor Sterne, nor of anybody but Dr. Moore. By the bye you have deprived me of *Zeluco*; remember that when you are disposed to rake up the sins of my neglect from among the ashes of my laziness.¹ He has paid me a pretty compliment by quoting me in his last publication.

Whether at this period, or on occasion of a former visit, Dr.

¹ Subsequently the Poet made a gift to Mrs. Dunlop of the two volumes of *Zeluco*, with the inscription, "To my much-esteemed friend Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop." It contained the Poet's

marginal notes in pencil. It is now in the possession of Mrs. Dunlop's great-grandson, Mr. Wallace Dunlop, C.B. The second volume was unhappily destroyed by ants in India.

Moore formed the Poet's personal intimacy, cannot be ascertained; but an earlier date is more probable. We are informed by Dr. Moore's grandson, Mr. John Moore of Corswall, that both he and his brother learned from their father that the kindly physician proposed to invite the Poet to visit him in London, but that the proposal was stoutly opposed by his wife, on account of rumours which had reached her respecting the Bard's social excesses.

In 1795 Dr. Moore issued in two octavo volumes his *View of the Causes and Progress of the French Revolution*. A second novel from his pen, entitled *Edward*, appeared in 1796, in two volumes duodecimo. This was followed in 1799 by a third work of fiction, entitled *Mordaunt*, in three volumes octavo. In 1797 he prepared a memoir of Dr. Tobias Smollett for a collected edition of his works. For some years he spent his summers at Richmond; he died at his residence in London on the 20th February 1802. In the following year were published, in two volumes crown octavo, selections from his writings under the title of *Mooriana*; and in 1820 was issued, in seven octavo volumes, a collected edition of his works, with a memoir by Dr. Robert Anderson. Undistinguished by depth of thought or any striking originality, Dr. Moore exhibits in his writings a wide range of information, which is conveyed in a style easy and pleasing. He everywhere indulges a sardonic wit, yet never fails to impress the reader with the sincerity of his purpose and the benevolence of his nature. In delineating life and manners he exhibits much acuteness, combined with delicacy and discrimination.

Dr. Moore married Jane, youngest daughter of the Rev. James Simson, Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, descended from the family of Simson of Kirkton Hall, Ayrshire, and a younger brother of Professor Robert Simson, the distinguished

mathematician. Of the marriage were born five sons; also a daughter, Jane, who died unmarried in December 1842.

John, the eldest son, was born at Glasgow on the 13th November 1761.¹ Educated at the High School of his native city, he in 1776 obtained a commission as ensign in the 51st Foot. Promoted as lieutenant in the 72nd Regiment, he served in America till the close of the war in 1783, when his regiment was reduced, and he was put on half-pay. In 1780 he was, through the influence of the Duke of Hamilton, elected M.P. for the Lanark district of burghs. In 1787 he attained the rank of major in the 60th Regiment, and in 1788 exchanged into his first regiment, the 51st, of which in 1790 he by purchase became lieutenant-colonel. In 1794 he accompanied the expedition against Corsica, and was wounded in storming the Mozzello fort at the siege of Calvi. Thereafter he distinguished himself under Sir Ralph Abercromby in the expedition against the West Indies. Returning to Great Britain in 1797, he was employed in suppressing the Irish revolt, afterwards joining the expeditions to Holland and the Mediterranean. Under Sir Ralph Abercromby in Egypt, he led the assault at Aboukir, and at the battle of Alexandria was severely wounded. On the renewal of the war with France after the short peace of 1802, he served in Sicily and in the expedition to Sweden. In 1808 he was sent to Portugal, when he became commander-in-chief. Having advanced his army of 15,000 into Spain, owing to an inaccurate representation as to the patriotic earnestness of the inhabitants in resisting the French yoke, he skilfully effected a retreat for a distance of two hundred miles, defeating the French in several skirmishes without losing a standard. He had determined to embark his army at Corunna, but, the ships not having arrived in time, he ventured, with greatly inferior numbers, to accept battle offered by Marshal Soult. The

¹ Glasgow Baptismal Register.

conflict took place on the 16th January 1809, when a complete victory was gained by the British troops. But the gallant commander, struck by a cannon-ball, died in the hour of triumph. His military skill and gallantry were warmly commended by the Duke of Wellington; and Soult, his generous adversary, afterwards reared at his grave at Corunna a monument to his memory. By order of Parliament, he received a monumental statue in St. Paul's Cathedral; and his admiring and grateful fellow-countrymen have commemorated him at Glasgow by a marble monument in the Cathedral, also by a statue in George Square. In 1804 General Moore was appointed a Knight of the Bath. He died unmarried.

James, second son of Dr. John Moore, was born at Glasgow on the 20th December 1762.¹ In 1821 he assumed the additional surname of Carrick, in compliance with the testamentary injunction of his relative, Robert Carrick of the Ship Bank, Glasgow, who bequeathed to him the estate of Corswall in Wigtownshire, and other lands in the counties of Kirkeudbright and Ayr. James Carrick-Moore published in quarto, in 1809, *Narrative of the Campaign of the British Army in Spain, commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir John Moore, authenticated by Official Papers and Original Letters*; also at London, in 1834, in two octavo volumes, *The Life of Lieutenant-General Sir John Moore, K.B.* He died 1st June 1860. Mr. Carrick-Moore married, 31st December 1798, Harriet, only daughter of John Henderson, Esq., with issue two sons, also three daughters, Harriet Jane, Louisa, and Julia.

John, the elder son, now of Corswall, was born on the 12th February 1805. He married, 12th April 1835, Caroline, daughter of John Bradley, Esq., of Colborne Hill, Staffordshire, with issue a son, John Graham, born 25th September 1845, and a daughter, Mary.

¹ Glasgow Baptismal Register.

Graham Francis, younger son of James Carrick-Moore of Cornwall, was born at London on the 18th September 1807. Having attended Westminster School, and studied at Trinity College, Cambridge, he was called to the English Bar, and went on the Western Circuit. In 1842 he, on the death of his cousin, Mrs. Michell-Esmeade, inherited the estate of Monkton in Wiltshire, and assumed the name of Esmeade in terms of her will. Thereafter he, on account of feeble health, spent his winters at Rome, where he purchased a small property immediately to the exterior of the Porta del Popolo. Devoted to horticultural pursuits, he was also reputed for his benevolence. He died in October 1883.

Graham, third son of Dr. John Moore, was an admiral of the Royal Navy and G.C.B.; he died in 1843. He married, in 1812, Dora, daughter of Thomas Eden, Esq., with issue a son, John, born in 1821. Entering the navy, this gentleman became C.B. and Naval Aide-de-camp to the Queen. He died consequent on injuries received in the Crimean War.

Charles, fourth son of Dr. John Moore, a barrister of Lincoln's Inn, held office as Auditor of Public Accounts. He died unmarried.

Francis, fifth son of Dr. Moore, was some time Under Secretary for War. He married Frances, daughter of Sir William Twysden, Bart., and relict of Archibald, eleventh Earl of Eglinton, and left at his death in 1854 two sons, of whom William, the elder, was a lieutenant-general in the army and K.C.B. John, the younger son, died unmarried.

MARY MORISON.

THE heroine of one of Burns's best songs, Mary Morison, resided with her parents at Mauchline, when the Poet rented the farm of Moss-giel. Mary met the Bard only once, and then at the tea-table of a friend; but as his song, celebrating her charms, commences—

O Mary, at thy window be,

it is not improbable that he had incidentally observed her as she stood at the window of her father's cottage.

Mary's father, John Morison, was born in Ayrshire in 1724. He served in the 104th Regiment, of which he latterly became adjutant. Having distinguished himself in several important engagements, a small pension was at his death conferred upon his surviving daughter. Relative to one of his escapes, she used to relate the following anecdote. Perceiving a cannon-ball moving towards him, he stooped to the ground, and so escaped. Ignorant as to the cause of his so depressing himself, a superior officer called out, "Holloa, Morison, hold up!"—a speech to which he promptly replied, "I'm not ashamed to stoop to a cannon-ball."

On retiring from active service, Adjutant Morison settled at Halifax, in Yorkshire. There he married the daughter of Mr. William Walker, a small landowner, by whom he had two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth. On his wife's death, about the year 1784, he returned to Ayrshire, his native county, where he rented a cottage at Mauchline. Here he lived in seclusion, cherishing only a few intimacies. Mary, his elder daughter, who was celebrated by the Poet, had a singularly delicate complexion, and was otherwise engaging. By her surviving sister she was described as "one of the fairest creatures that ever the sun shone upon."

Mary was short-lived. She was seized with a consumptive ailment, of which she died on the 29th June 1791, about the age of twenty-four. Her sister Elizabeth, born 2nd June 1769, married, 19th November 1793, John Carmichael, son of John Carmichael of Manlaskie,¹ who claimed descent from the house of Carmichael, of which the Earls of Hyndford were the ennobled chiefs.

Born on the 29th of January 1772, John Carmichael selected the profession of a public teacher. After some time conducting a school at Muirkirk, in Ayrshire, he was preferred to the mastership of Bainsford Institution, near Falkirk. Adopting congregational views of Church government, he occasionally officiated in the pulpit with much acceptance. By his wife, Elizabeth Morison, he had five sons and three daughters. Margaret, the eldest daughter, born 1st June 1796, died 16th February 1814; Mary, born 26th November 1809, died at Scutari, unmarried; Janet, born 3rd June 1812, survives. Three of the sons—John, born 15th January 1799; James, born 26th October 1801; and Joseph Stainton, born 22nd December 1806—died young.

Archibald Nisbet, the eldest son, was born 26th September 1794. He studied at the High School of Edinburgh, of which, in 1811, he became dux. Elected one of the masters of the Edinburgh Academy, he attained eminence as a classical instructor. In 1841 he published his well-known work on "Greek Verbs." He died on the 8th January 1847. His son John was a master in the High School, and his son James is a master in the Academy of Edinburgh.

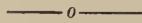
William Walker, fourth son of John Carmichael and Elizabeth Morison, was born on the 20th October 1803. Having studied at the High School and the University of Edinburgh, he was in 1833 elected Classical Master in the Madras College, St. Andrews. In

¹ This gentleman perished in crossing the Clyde near his house, on the 28th August 1774.

1843 he was preferred as one of the masters in the High School of Edinburgh. He died on the 30th August 1848.

Adjutant Morison married, secondly, Ann Tomlieson, a native of Ireland, by whom he had two sons, John and George; also three daughters, Mary, Ann, and Jane. George entered the army and died young. John, the elder son, held a commission in the army, and became adjutant of his regiment. On retiring from active service, he resided some time in Ayrshire, and latterly emigrated to Canada. He married, with issue. The daughters, Ann and Jane also married, with issue.

Adjutant Morison died at Mauchline, on the 16th April 1804, in the eightieth year of his age; his second wife, Ann Tomlieson, died on the 6th September 1831, at the age of seventy-six. Both are commemorated on a family tombstone in Mauchline Churchyard, erected in 1825 by the Adjutant's grandson, Mr. Archibald Nisbet Carmichael, of the Edinburgh Academy. Mary Morison's name is also inscribed upon the tombstone.



CHRISTINA MORTON.

ONE of the Poet's "Six Belles of Mauchline," Christina Morton, was a native of that parish, with which for several generations her progenitors were connected. Possessing a most agreeable manner and a handsome person, she had also the advantage of inheriting a fortune of about £600. She married, on the 27th December 1788, Robert Paterson, draper and general merchant in Mauchline, with issue four sons, James, Hugh, Robert, and Alexander; also two daughters, Susanna and Margaret.

JOHN MURDOCH.

Son of John Murdoch, described in the parish register as "in-dweller in Ayr," and his wife, Margaret Robertson, the subject of this notice was born in Ayr on the 25th March 1747.¹ With a view to being qualified as a public instructor, he was educated at the High School of Ayr, under the head master, David Tennant, and his staff of colleagues. In a letter to Dr. Currie, he relates how that in the spring of 1765 he met William Burnes, the Poet's father, by appointment at an inn, in order to his undertaking the scholastic duties at Alloway. William Burnes carefully examined his mode of handwriting, which he approved; his other qualifications being certified by his teachers. Between William Burnes and himself it was therefore agreed that he should forthwith enter upon his duties, he being allowed in recompense a small payment in money, also board and lodging at the houses of five neighbouring farmers, by whom he was employed.

In May 1765 Murdoch opened his school at Alloway, in a small room in the close vicinity of the Poet's birthplace. And though about a year afterwards William Burnes quitted Alloway for Mount Oliphant, two miles distant, his sons, Robert and Gilbert, continued their attendance. The arrangement subsisted for two and a half years; and at the expiry of that period, the tenant at Mount Oliphant's eldest son was found to be a tolerable reader, to be able to write, and to have made some proficiency in English grammar. Before the Poet had completed his eighth year, he borrowed from his schoolmaster a life of Hannibal. Prior to his leaving the district in the autumn of 1767, Mr. Murdoch called at Mount Oliphant, to express his adieu, and to leave with William Burnes,

¹ Ayr Parish Register.

who had treated him with special kindness, a small token of his regard. On his arrival, he was hospitably invited to remain for the evening, and he proceeded by way of entertainment to read from the tragedy of "Titus Andronicus," which he proposed to leave as a gift. The result was unsatisfactory as to his immediate intention, for he soon found the family in tears; while his pupil, Robert, energetically protested that if a book depicting such a frightful story was left in the house, he would burn it at once. In consequence, Mr. Murdoch substituted as a gift a comedy, translated from the French, entitled "The School for Love."¹

Leaving Alloway towards the close of 1767, Mr. Murdoch taught at Dumfries and other places, but in 1772 he was recalled to his native district by being, after a competition with four other candidates, appointed teacher of the English school at Ayr. In the following year he received the Poet as a boarder. "He was now with me," he communicated to Dr. Currie, "day and night, in school, at all meals, and in all my walks." But the connexion thus happily formed was of brief continuance. Robert was speedily recalled to Mount Oliphant to assist in harvesting, and in the lapse of other two months was permanently withdrawn. During the interval, however, he, under Mr. Murdoch's teaching, made considerable progress in acquiring a knowledge of the French language.

After teaching successfully at Ayr for some years, Mr. Murdoch became suspected of being unduly addicted to the social pleasures, and having on some public occasion spoken unadvisedly of Dr. Dalrymple, one of the parochial ministers, he brought upon himself so much hostile feeling, that his resignation of office became a matter of necessity.

Mr. Murdoch proceeded to London, and there found employment as a teacher. By the Poet he was not forgotten. When, owing to

¹ Gilbert Burns's Narrative.

his father's feeble health, and other domestic anxieties, he had little leisure for correspondence, he embraced the opportunity, afforded by a frank, of communicating with his early preceptor. His letter, which is strictly autobiographical, thus proceeds :—

LOCHLIE, 15th January 1783.

DEAR SIR,—As I have an opportunity of sending you a letter without putting you to that expense which any production of mine would ill repay, I embrace it with pleasure, to tell you that I have not forgotten, nor will ever forget, the many obligations I lie under to your kindness and friendship. I do not doubt, sir, but you will wish to know what has been the result of all the pains of an indulgent father, and a masterly teacher; and I wish I could gratify your curiosity with such a recital as you would be pleased with; but this is what I am afraid will not be the case. I have indeed kept pretty clear of vicious habits, and in this respect I hope my conduct will not disgrace the education I have gotten; but, as a man of the world, I am most miserably deficient. One would have thought that, bred as I have been under a father who has figured pretty well as *un homme des affaires*, I might have been what the world calls a pushing active fellow; but to tell you the truth, sir, there is hardly anything more my reverse. I seem to be one sent into the world to see and observe; and I very easily compound with the knave who tricks me of my money, if there be anything original about him which shows me human nature in a different light from anything I have seen before. In short, the joy of my heart is to “study men, their manners, and their ways;” and for this darling subject I cheerfully sacrifice every other consideration. I am quite indolent about those great concerns that set the bustling, busy sons of care agog; and if I have to answer for the present hour, I am very easy with regard to anything further. Even the last worst shift of the unfortunate and the wretched does not much terrify me. I know that even then, my talent for what country folks call “a sensible crack,” when once it is sanctified by a hoary head, would procure me so much esteem, that even then—I would learn to be happy. However, I am under no apprehensions about that, for though indolent, yet so far as an extremely delicate constitution permits, I am not lazy; and in many things, especially in tavern matters, I am a strict economist; not, indeed, for the sake of money, but one of the principal parts in my composition is a kind of pride of stomach, and I seem to fear the face of any man living; above everything, I abhor as hell, the

idea of sneaking in a corner to avoid a dun—possibly some pitiful sordid wretch who in my heart I despise and detest. 'Tis this, and this alone, which endears economy to me.

In these emphatic sentences the Poet communicates to Mr. Murdoch sentiments, which of a like nature he about the same time expressed in his letter to Thomas Orr, and which he afterwards embodied in verse in his “Epistle to Davie,” and in one of the stanzas in the “Epistle to a Young Friend.” In his letter to Mr. Murdoch he further proceeds:—

In the matter of books, indeed, I am very profuse. My favourite authors are of the sentimental kind, such as Shenstone, particularly in his *Elegies*; Thomson; *Man of Feeling* (a book I prize next to the Bible); *Man of the World*; Sterne, especially his *Sentimental Journey*; M'Pherson's *Ossian*, etc.: these are the glorious models after which I endeavour to form my conduct, and 'tis incongruous, 'tis absurd, to suppose that the man whose mind glows with sentiments lightened up at their sacred flame—the man whose heart distends with benevolence to the whole human race—he “who can soar above this little scene of things”—can he descend to mind the paltry concerns about which the terræfilial race fret, and fume, and vex themselves! O how the glorious triumph swells my heart! I forget that I am a poor insignificant devil, unnoticed and unknown, stalking up and down fairs and markets, when I happen to be in them reading a page or two of mankind, and “catching the manners living as they rise,” whilst the men of business jostle me on every side, as an idle incumbrance in their way. But I daresay I have by this time tired your patience, so I shall conclude with begging you to give Mrs. Murdoch—not my compliments, for that is a mere commonplace story, but my warmest, kindest wishes for her welfare; and accept of the same for yourself, from, dear sir, yours, etc.

William Burnes died on the 13th of February 1784, and among those specially informed of the event by the Poet was Mr. Murdoch. But amidst the struggles of a literary life in London, the Ayrshire schoolmaster was indisposed to enter into correspondence with an old pupil, who was disposed chiefly to expatiate about thoughts and

feelings, and who, from his own description of himself, was not likely to render any correspondence with him desirable. The condition was altered most materially when it became no longer doubtful that the smart Alloway schoolboy had developed into a man of genius, whose fame was spreading on every side. The Poet usually destroyed his letters, but the following, addressed to him by his schoolmaster, was preserved:—

LONDON, 28th October 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,—As my friend, Mr. Brown, is going from this place to your neighbourhood, I embrace the opportunity of telling you that I am yet alive, tolerably well, and always in expectation of being better. By the much-valued letters before me, I see that it was my duty to have given you this intelligence about three years and nine months ago; and have nothing to allege as an excuse but that we poor, busy, bustling bodies in London are so much taken up with the various pursuits in which we are here engaged, that we seldom think of any person, creature, place, or thing that is absent. But this is not altogether the case with me, for I often think of you and *Hornie* and *Russell*, and on *unfathomed depth* and *lowan brunstane*, all in the same minute, although you and they are (as I suppose) at a considerable distance. I flatter myself, however, with the pleasing thought that you and I shall meet some time or other, either in Scotland or England. If ever you come hither, you will have the satisfaction of seeing your poems relished by the Caledonians in London full as much as they can be by those of Edinburgh. We frequently repeat some of your verses in our Caledonian Society; and you may believe I am not a little vain that I have had some share in cultivating such a genius. I was not absolutely certain that you were the author till a few days ago, when I made a visit to Mrs. Hill, Dr. M'Comb's eldest daughter, who lives in town, and who told me she was informed of it by a letter from her sister in Edinburgh, with whom you had been in company when in that capital.

Pray let me know if you have any intention of visiting this huge, overgrown metropolis. It would afford matter for a large poem. Here you would have an opportunity of indulging your vein in the study of mankind, perhaps to a greater degree than in any city upon the face of the globe; for the inhabitants of London, as you know, are a collection of all nations, kindreds, and tongues, who make it, as it were, their centre of commerce. . . .

Present my respectful compliments to Mrs. Burns, to my dear friend Gilbert, and all the rest of her amiable children. May the Father of the universe bless you all with those principles and dispositions that the best of parents took such uncommon pains to instil into your minds from your earliest infancy! May you live as he did! If you do, you can never be unhappy! I feel myself grow serious all at once, and affected in a manner I cannot describe. I shall only add that it is one of the greatest pleasures I promise myself before I die, that of seeing the family of a man whose memory I revere more than that of any person I ever was acquainted with. — I am, my dear sir, yours sincerely,
JOHN MURDOCH.

The Poet had in turn mislaid Mr. Murdoch's letter, which, being attended with the loss of his address, prevented his recommending to the good offices of his early preceptor his brother William, who early in 1790 proceeded from Newcastle to London to seek employment as a journeyman saddler. Having some months later recovered Mr. Murdoch's address, through the good offices of a common friend, he wrote to him in these terms:—

ELLISLAND, 16th July 1790.

MY DEAR SIR,—I received a letter from you a long time ago, but unfortunately, as it was in the time of my peregrinations and journeyings through Scotland, I mislaid or lost it, and, by consequence, your direction along with it. Luckily, my good star brought me acquainted with Mr. Kennedy, who, I understand, is an acquaintance of yours; and by his means and mediation I hope to replace that link which my unfortunate negligence had so unluckily broke in the chain of our correspondence. I was the more vexed at the vile accident, as my brother William, a journeyman saddler, has been for some time in London, and wished above all things for your direction, that he might have paid his respects to his father's friend.

After supplying Mr. Murdoch with the name of his brother's employer in the Strand, and assuring his correspondent that his brother "would joyfully wait on him on receiving a card intimating where he would be found," the Poet promises that his next letter

would be “a long one,” and would include “the eventful history of a life, the early years of which owed so much to *his* kind tutorage.”

Mr. Murdoch received the Poet's letter on the 26th July, and having at the same time been informed that the young saddler was ill, he the next morning waited on his employer, who reported his death. He had succumbed to an attack of putrid fever. A few days later his remains were deposited in St. Paul's Churchyard—Mr. Murdoch discharging the office of chief mourner. A century ago communication between the metropolis and Scotland was costly, and those whose finances were circumscribed waited, unless in circumstances of urgency, until they could transmit their communications by a private hand. Mr. Murdoch so waited in conveying to the Poet the sad intelligence that his brother was no more. His letter conveying the tidings is dated from Hart Street, Bloomsbury Square, 14th September 1790. After detailing the circumstances connected with his brother's death, Mr. Murdoch informs the Poet that about a fortnight before the arrival of his letter, the deceased had called upon him. He proceeds :—

We had only one interview, and that was highly entertaining to me in several respects. He mentioned some instruction I had given him when very young, to which, he said, he owed, in a great measure, the philanthropy he possessed. He also took notice of my exhorting you all, when I wrote, about eight years ago, to the man who, of all mankind that I ever knew, stood highest in my esteem, “not to let go your integrity.” You may easily conceive that such conversation was both pleasing and encouraging to me; I anticipated a deal of rational happiness from future conversations. Vain are our expectations and hopes. They are so almost always—perhaps (nay, certainly) for our good. Were it not for disappointed hopes, we could hardly spend a thought on another state of existence, or be in any degree reconciled to the quitting of this. I know of no one source of consolation to those who have lost young relatives equal to that of their being of a good disposition and of a promising character. . . . Your letter to Dr. Moore I delivered at his house, and shall most likely know your opinion of *Zeluco* the first time I meet with him. I wish and

hope for a long letter. Be particular about your mother's health. I hope she is too much a Christian to be afflicted above measure, or to sorrow as those who have no hope. One of the most pleasing hopes I have is to visit you all; but I am commonly disappointed in what I most ardently wish for.—I am, dear sir, yours sincerely,

JOHN MURDOCH.

In transmitting to Mr. Cromek a copy of the Poet's letter to him of the 16th July 1790, Mr. Murdoch, in a letter dated Hart Street, Bloomsbury, 28th December 1807, uses these words :—

When I recollect the pleasure—and I hope benefit—I received from the conversation of William Burns, especially when on the Lord's day we walked together for about two miles to the house of prayer, there publicly to adore and praise the Giver of all good, I entertain an ardent hope that together we shall “renew the glorious theme in distant worlds” with powers more adequate to the mighty subject—THE EXUBERANT BENEFICENCE OF THE GREAT CREATOR.

After referring to the brief revival of his intercourse in London with young William Burns, Mr. Murdoch proceeds :—

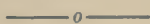
Let not parents and teachers imagine that it is needless to talk seriously to children. They are sooner fit to be reasoned with than is generally thought. Strong and indelible impressions are to be made before the mind be agitated and ruffled by the numerous train of distracting cares and unruly passions, whereby it is frequently rendered almost unsusceptible of the principles and precepts of rational religion and sound morality.¹

The history of Mr. Murdoch's career in London is not certainly known. By the Poet he was addressed as “Teacher of French.” In his letter to the Poet of the 14th September 1790, he refers to “Mr. Stevenson's accidentally calling at my shop to buy something.” After a time he resumed tuition, giving instructions privately in English and French. While resident in London the celebrated Talleyrand sought his instruction in the English tongue. And it is

¹ The letter of Mr. Murdoch from which these excerpts are made is printed in the *Scottish Journal*, December 11, 1847.

of especial interest to learn that one of the pupils of his old age was Mrs. Everett, the Poet's grand-daughter.¹ Possessed of great accuracy as a philologist, Mr. Murdoch assisted John Walker, the celebrated lexicographer, in preparing for the press, in 1802, the third edition of his dictionary; and it is understood that from his pen proceeded the "Rules to be observed by the natives of Scotland for attaining a just pronounciation of English," included in the dissertations. Mr. Murdoch published in 1783 a duodecimo volume entitled *Radical Vocabulary of the French Language*; and in 1788 a work in octavo, bearing the title, *Pronunciacion and Orthography of the French Language*. He issued, in 1811, a *Dictionary of Distinctions, in three Alphabets*.

Latterly Mr. Murdoch suffered from feeble health, and, like many other men of letters, natives of Scotland, who have settled in London, was in danger of perishing from absolute want. By some admirers of the Poet a small sum was raised on his behalf. He died at London on the 20th April 1824, at the age of seventy-seven. To his industry and pious care we are indebted for the *Manual of Religious Belief* by the Poet's father. By Gilbert Burns we are informed that his dispositions were genial and beneficent.



ROBERT MUIR.

ROBERT MUIR was, according to Gilbert Burns, "one of those friends which Robert's poetry had procured him, who was dear to his heart." A wine merchant in Fore Street, Kilmarnock, and proprietor of Loanfoot, a small estate in the locality, he was descended from a family who by industry had acquired considerable

¹ Private letter from Mr. Gilbert Burns of Dublin to Mr. James Gibson, merchant in Liverpool.

opulence. His grandfather, David Muir, weaver in the village of Crookedholm, was on the 1st October 1726 served heir to "the Barn," a tenement situated in Holmhead of Kilmarnock. On the 22nd August 1711 he married, as his first wife, Agnes, daughter of Adam Dickie, by whom he had a son, William.

Born on the 27th February 1714, William Muir succeeded, on his father's death prior to 1761, to the Kilmarnock property.¹ He died in 1771, at the age of fifty-seven. On the 22nd December 1746 he married, as his second wife, Janet, daughter of William Craig of Holms, in the parish of Kilmaurs,² and of the union were born seven children, of whom survived infancy a son, Robert, and a daughter, Agnes.

Robert Muir was born at Kilmarnock on the 8th August 1758.³ He established himself in the wine trade at Kilmarnock about his twenty-fourth year, and had therefore been about four years in business when he in 1786 formed the Poet's acquaintance. On the 20th of March 1786 we find the Poet addressing him in a brief note from Mossgiel, in which he indicates his disappointment that he had "not the pleasure of seeing him as he returned through Mauchline." Enclosing to him a copy of his lines on "Scotch Drink," he expresses the hope of being able to pay him a visit "some time before we hear the gowk,"—that is, before the cuckoo made its appearance, about the middle of April. As the Poet concludes the letter, "Your humble servant," it is all but certain that the friendship had just begun. It must have made rapid progress, for Mr. Muir appears as a subscriber for six dozen copies of the Kilmarnock edition, immediately on the proposals for printing being issued. Writing to Mr. Muir from Mossgiel an undated letter, ascribed to

¹ To the Rev. George Mure Smith, one of the ministers of Stirling, we are indebted for these particulars.

² Kilmarnock Parish Register.

³ *Ibid.*

the 8th September 1786, the Poet begins thus: "My friend and brother, warm recollections of an absent friend presses so hard upon my heart, that I send him the prefixed bagatelle, pleased with the thought that it will greet the man of my bosom, and be a kind of distant language of friendship." He adds that the poem "was nearly an extemporaneous production, on a wager with Mr. Hamilton that he would not produce a poem on the subject in a given time." Promising to visit his correspondent "in the latter part of next week," he concludes, "My dear sir, your most devoted."

In a letter to Mr. Muir, dated Mossgiel, 18th November, the Poet informs him of his intention of proceeding to Edinburgh "on Monday or Tuesday come se'ennight," but promises to make him a visit in the interval. Beginning his letter, "My Dear Sir," he concludes, "I am ever, your much indebted." From Edinburgh, on the 15th of December, the Poet addressed him in a communication which commences thus:—

MY DEAR SIR,—I delayed writing you till I was able to give you some rational account of myself and my affairs. I am got under the patronage of the Duchess of Gordon, Countess-Dowager of Glencairn, Sir John Whitefoord, the Dean of Faculty, Professors Blair, Stewart, Greenfield, and several others of the noblesse and literati. I believe I shall begin at Mr. Creech's as my publisher. I am still undetermined as to the future; and, as usual, never think of it. I have now neither house nor home that I can call my own, and live on the world at large. I am just a poor wayfaring pilgrim on the road to Parnassus, a thoughtless wanderer and sojourner in a strange land.

On the 20th December the Poet acknowledged a letter from his friend offering to subscribe for sixty copies of his Edinburgh edition, an extent of liberality which he declines. He encloses to him "a parcel of subscription bills," and a hint as to giving some account of his life, he proposes to act upon in a future letter. When the

Edinburgh edition was published, Mr. Muir's name appeared in the list as a subscriber for forty copies.

In the Journal of his Border tour, the Poet, writing on the 12th May 1787, describes one whom he had in Roxburghshire become acquainted with as "a most gentlemanly, clever, handsome fellow, . . . his mind and manners astonishingly like [*his*] dear old friend, Robert Muir in Kilmarnock." From Stirling, on the 26th August, he communicated to Mr. Muir that he had commenced a tour to the Highlands. He proceeds :—

This morning I knelt at the tomb of Sir John the Graham, the gallant friend of the immortal Wallace [at Falkirk], and two hours ago I said a fervent prayer for old Caledonia over the hole in a blue whinstone where Robert de Bruce fixed his royal standard on the banks of Bannockburn; and just now from Stirling Castle, I have seen by the setting sun the glorious prospects of the windings of Forth through the rich carse of Stirling, and skirting the equally rich carse of Falkirk.

About the commencement of the year 1788 Mr. Muir had a private meeting with the Poet, and it was probably on this occasion that he made known to his friend that he was labouring under a pulmonary ailment, and that he entertained grave misgivings as to his recovery. Writing to him on the 7th March, the Poet, in order not to unduly disquiet him in relation to his health, commences by referring to his own prospects in life. He then proceeds :—

I shall not stay in Edinburgh above a week. I set out on Monday, and would have come by Kilmarnock, but there are several small sums owing me for my first edition about Galston and Newmills, and I shall set off so early as to dispatch my business, and reach Glasgow by night. When I return I shall devote a forenoon or two to make some kind of acknowledgment for all the kindness I owe your friendship. Now that I hope to settle with some credit and comfort at home, there was not any friendship or friendly correspondence that promised me more pleasure than yours; I hope I will not be disappointed. I trust the spring will renew your shattered frame, and make your friends

happy. You and I have often agreed that life is no great blessing on the whole. The close of life, indeed, to a reasoning eye, is—

Dark as was chaos, ere the infant sun
Was roll'd together, or had try'd his beams
Athwart the gloom profound.

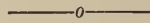
But an honest man has nothing to fear. If we lie down in the grave, the whole man a piece of broke machinery, to moulder with the clods of the valley, be it so; at least there is an end of pain, care, woes, and wants: if that part of us called Mind does survive the apparent destruction of the man—away with the old-wife prejudices and tales! Every age and every nation has had a different set of stories; and as the many are always weak, of consequence they have often, perhaps always, been deceived. A man conscious of having acted an honest part among his fellow-creatures—even granting that he may have been the sport at times of passions and instincts—he goes to a great Unknown Being, who could have no other end in giving him existence but to make him happy, who gave him those passions and instincts, and well knows their force. These, my worthy friend, are my ideas, and I know they are not far different from yours. It becomes a man of sense to think for himself; particularly in a case where all men are equally interested, and where, indeed, all men are equally in the dark. . . . Adieu, my dear sir! God send us a cheerful meeting.

Not improbably the friends had a sad last meeting. Mr. Muir died on the 22nd of April. In his letter to Mrs. Dunlop of the 13th December 1789, the Poet accompanies his musings on a future state by alluding to his departed friend of Kilmarnock in these words:—

There should I meet the friend, the disinterested friend of my early life—
the man who rejoiced to see me, because he loved me and could serve me—Muir!
Thy weaknesses were the aberrations of human nature, but thy heart glowed
with everything generous, manly, and noble; and if ever emanation from the
All-good Being animated a human form, it was thine.

Mr. Muir was in prosperous circumstances, and carefully applied his savings in liquidating burdens which lay upon his inheritance of

Loanfoot. He succeeded in wholly redeeming the possession, since six days before his death the discharge of the last bond upon it was entered in the Register of Deeds. He died unmarried, and in the estate of Loanfoot was succeeded by his sister Agnes. This gentlewoman was born at Kilmarnock on the 28th November 1754; she married William Smith, merchant, Kilmarnock.



WILLIAM MUIR.

WILLIAM MUIR, tenant of the Mill of Fail, was, when the Poet occupied the farm of Mossgiel, one of his principal associates. His farm homestead was situated about two hundred yards to the east of Tarbolton village, on the road to Mossgiel. A tradition lingers that the tenant of Fail Mill was the original Willie of the song, "Willie brew'd a peck o' maut," and that another of the three original heroes of the piece was Allan Guthrie, farmer at Tarshaw in the same locality. As the Poet, however, assigns a different origin to the song, his testimony is conclusive on the point, yet it is not improbable that the composition may have been drafted at Mossgiel, and afterwards recast. In this manner Burns proceeded frequently; and it is to be remarked that the brewing of "a peck o' maut" would be perfectly appropriate in connexion with the tenant of Fail Mill, and is devoid of meaning in relation to the Edinburgh schoolmaster.

A William Muir, son of Robert Muir, was baptized at Mauchline on the 14th of February 1745,¹ and it is believed that this child became the future miller. William Muir is a subscriber to the

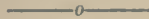
¹ Mauchline Parish Register.

Poet's Edinburgh edition, and in his house, under his wife's care, Jean Armour sought shelter, when expelled by her father in the winter of 1787-88, on account of her continued attachment to the Poet. His homestead is the "Willie's mill" in the poem of "Death and Doctor Hornbook."

William Muir died in 1793, when the Poet in his *Commonplace Book* commemorated him in the following epitaph:—

An honest man lies here at rest,
 As e'er God with His image blest ;
 The friend of man, the friend of truth,
 The friend of age, and guide of youth :
 Few hearts like his, with virtue warmed,
 Few heads with knowledge so informed :
 If there's another world, he lives in bliss :
 If there is none, he made the best of this.

Muir settled his affairs negligently, and it was the Poet's privilege to make interest on behalf of his widow with Mr. Gavin Hamilton and others, so as to secure to her a proper provision.



ALEXANDER NASMYTH.

THE family of Nasmyth has been traced to the thirteenth century. One of its representatives, Sir Michael Nasmyth, Chamberlain of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, acquired in 1544 the lands of Posso and Glenarth by marrying the heiress Elizabeth Baird, whose grandfather, Sir Gilbert Baird, fell on the field of Flodden.

Descended from a branch of the family, who appear as burgesses and guild-brethren of Edinburgh in the seventeenth century, Alexander Nasmyth was born in that city on the 7th September

1758. His parents were Michael Nasmyth and Lilius Anderson, who became spouses when the bridegroom was a working joiner; he subsequently became an architect and house-builder.

Alexander Nasmyth evinced in childhood a faculty for drawing and sketching, and was consequently sent by his father to the academy of art established in the city under the celebrated Alexander Runciman. At the age of seventeen he entered the London studio of Allan Ramsay, painter to the King, and in this connexion considerably advanced his artistic studies. He afterwards visited Italy, where he made sketches of interesting scenery, while at Rome he familiarized himself with art in its higher forms.

Returning to his native city, Alexander Nasmyth readily procured professional employment. He painted several important family groups, of which specimens may be seen at Minto House, also in the Earl of Rosebery's residence at Dalmeny.

When Mr. Creech had agreed to produce the first Edinburgh edition of Burns's poems, he thought of illustrating the volume with a portrait of the Bard executed by Nasmyth; he therefore invited the artist to meet the Poet at his house, and arranged for the necessary sittings.

Mr. Nasmyth's painting-room was in Wardrop's Court, near the Poet's lodgings in the High Street, and it therefore suited the Bard to visit the artist frequently, not for limning purposes only, but also for conversation. When Mr. Nasmyth was satisfied that he had caught the Poet's features, he was content, and left the portrait otherwise unfinished. It was now placed by Mr. Creech in the hands of Mr. John Beugo, the accomplished engraver, to be transferred to copper in a style known as stipple. With a view to secure an exact likeness, Mr. Beugo had from the Poet several sittings, which he carefully utilized. From that cause, or some

other unexplained reason, Mr. Nasmyth expressed himself as dissatisfied with Beugo's work, while a mezzotint of his portrait by Walker he commended warmly. On being shown by Walker an impression of his mezzotint, he wrote: "I cannot give you a more convincing proof of my entire satisfaction with your print, than to tell you that your engraving actually reminds me more distinctly of Burns than does my own picture." Mr. Nasmyth's original painting was given to the Poet, and was much valued by his widow. Afterwards acquired by Colonel William Nicol Burns, the Poet's son, it was bequeathed by him to the Scottish National Gallery, where it hangs now. Of two duplicates of it, made by Mr. Nasmyth, one is preserved in the National Portrait Gallery, London, the other at Auchendrane House, Ayrshire.

During his residence in Edinburgh, Burns warmly cherished Mr. Nasmyth's society; he in the spring of 1787 had frequent walks with him in the suburbs of the city. The friends occasionally walked to Arthur's Seat, together enjoying the sunrise on that majestic summit. At other times their morning walks extended to the Braid Hills, also to the Pentlands. On one occasion they on the Pentland moors proceeded eastward by Penicuik to Roslin, where, at a small inn, they tarried for breakfast. Pleased with the attention of the hostess, Mrs. David Wilson, the Poet inscribed on the back of a wooden dish these lines complimentary of her:—

My blessings on ye, honest wife !
 I ne'er was here before ;
 Ye've wealth o' gear for spoon and knife—
 Heart could not wish for more :
 Heav'n keep you clear o' sturt and strife,
 Till far ayont fourscore ;
 And while I toddle on thro' life,
 I'll ne'er gae by your door.

While prosecuting their journey, terminating at Roslin, the painter and Poet were startled by loud and desperate exclamations proceeding from a cottage. They were uttered by a lunatic, and the Poet, when he became aware of the fact, was deeply moved.¹ Mr. Nasmyth would in thrilling terms describe the occurrence, depicting the deep effect produced by it on the Poet's sensitive nature. In a letter to Mr. Beugo, written from Ellisland on the 9th September 1788, the Poet concludes thus: "If you see Mr. Nasmyth, remember me to him most respectfully, as he both loves and deserves respect; though, if he would pay less respect to the mere carcase of greatness, I should think him much nearer perfection."

In 1827, forty years after the Poet's death, Mr. Nasmyth prepared for Mr. J. G. Lockhart's memoir a portrait of the Poet, which the biographer describes thus:—

The Poet [is] at full length, as he appeared in Edinburgh in the first hey-day of his reputation; dressed in tight jockey boots, and very tight buckskin breeches, according to the fashion of the day, and (Jacobite as he was) in what was considered as the Fox livery, viz. a blue coat and buff waistcoat, with broad blue stripes. The surviving friends of Burns, who have seen this picture, are unanimous in pronouncing it to furnish a very lively representation of the Bard as he first attracted public notice on the streets of Edinburgh.

Like the Poet, Mr. Nasmyth held views much in unison with those of the French patriots, and consequently gave some offence to the members of that class whose patronage was essential to his

¹ In his "Autobiography," Mr. James Nasmyth remarks that, on occasion of the Roslin visit, his father made a sketch of the Poet under the ruins of Roslin Castle. He writes: "After an eight miles' walk they reached the castle at Roslin. Burns went down under the great Norman arch, where he stood rapt in speechless admiration of the scene. The thought of the eternal renewal of youth and freshness of nature, contrasted with the crumb-

ling decay of man's efforts to perpetuate his work, even when founded upon a rock, as Roslin Castle is, seemed greatly to affect him. My father was so much impressed with the scene that, while Burns was standing under the arch, he took his pencil and a scrap of paper, and made a hasty sketch of the subject. This sketch was highly treasured by my father, in remembrance of what must have been one of the most memorable days of his life."

success as a portrait-painter. Realizing his position, he determined henceforth (we quote his words), "to paint the beautiful face of Nature." So resolving in 1793, he afterwards attained great eminence as a landscape painter.

But Mr. Nasmyth devoted his attention to art in other branches. As a scene-painter he became celebrated. In his "Autobiography," David Roberts refers enthusiastically to Nasmyth's stock scenery of the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, consisting of landscapes, palaces, castles, and forest scenery. In 1820 he produced for the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh the scenery of "The Heart of Midlothian," one of his most successful efforts in stage painting. Mr. Nasmyth's mode of painting has, in the *Art Journal*,¹ been described by Mr. Alexander Fraser.

He drew in, writes Mr. Fraser, the subject-matter carefully with blacklead pencil, and then put in the masses of shadow with burnt sienna. . . . He mixed up tints for his skies, and used largely a colour he called peach-stone grey, made from calcined peach stones.

With respect to this latter remark, the writer has received a communication from Mr. Nasmyth's son, the inventor of the steam hammer, who writes thus:—

It was his friend the Rev. John Thomson of Duddingston who proposed the new pigment of peach-stone grey for art use. My father was amused with Thomson's idea of its value, and sometimes quoted it as an instance of the absurd hunting after new colours, supposed to be such—to overcome difficulties that only existed in the minds of searchers after such fallacious nostrums. I have named this specially, proceeds Mr. James Nasmyth, as it was so contrary to all my father's ideas of real art, which in all cases manifests its power independent of mere rarity of material. The idea of getting up a grey from the ashes of peach stones appeared to my father the culmination of absurdity, and hence his quoting it at the risk of displeasing Thomson, whom he valued exceedingly, both as a man and a truly great artist. My father had quite a

¹ *Art Journal*, July 1882, pp. 208, 209.

contempt for such huntings after special art materials as the means of solving art difficulties; he named those *materialists* who ran after such art "will o' the wisps."

For many years Mr. Nasmyth was consulted in the laying out and adornment of parks and pleasure-grounds, and his artistic skill was rendered available in improving the street architecture of Edinburgh. From his design was built the classic temple of Hygeia at St. Bernard's Well; the original design of the Dean Bridge was also prepared by him. With a strong turn for mechanics, he employed his hours of leisure in this department, and became inventor of the bow and string bridge employed in the roofing of broad spaces. To Sir James Hall he rendered important assistance in preparing his work *On the Origin of Gothic Architecture*.

For a time he acted as an art-instructor, his classes being attended by many persons who became eminent. When the Society of Artists was united with the Royal Scottish Academy, he was chosen an honorary member of the latter, and in its welfare evinced a deep concern. At the dinner given by the Academicians and others to Sir Henry Raeburn in 1822, on the occasion of his being knighted, he was invited to preside. Even in advanced age his devotion to art continued unabated. His last work, "Going Home," representing an aged labourer crossing a rustic bridge on his way towards a lonely cottage, was executed within a few weeks of his death. He died on the 10th April 1840, at the age of eighty-two.

Mr. Nasmyth married, in January 1786, Barbara, sister of Sir James Foulis, Bart., of Woodhall, Colinton,¹ by whom he had three sons and two daughters.

Patrick, the eldest son, was born on the 7th January 1787.² Possessing an intuitive love of art, he was led, in gratifying it, to abandon all other studies. In a sketching excursion he injured his

¹ Colinton Parish Register.

² Edinburgh Parish Register.

right hand, and thereafter painted with his left. Sleeping in a damp bed, he, in his seventeenth year, became afflicted with total deafness. Yet his marvellous artistic ardour suffered no diminution. He visited the mountains, and there, under the shelter of a travelling hut, waited storms, that he might depict them on his canvas. At the age of twenty he settled in London, where his simple and effective pictures at once attracted attention. He was styled the English Hobbema, having attached himself to his school. From London he made frequent journeys to picturesque scenes, which, graphically sketching, he reproduced in paintings elaborately finished. In a notice of him, Mr. G. W. Novice writes:—

In delineating the splendid varieties of the sky, the soft azure of the extreme distance bounded by an undulating horizon, the intervening open country, the leafing and barks of trees, and diversified foregrounds, where dock-leaves luxuriantly grow, he was truly unrivalled.¹

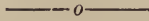
After a period of feeble health, he died at Lambeth on the 18th August 1831. His works continue to be greatly prized.

James, youngest child of Alexander Nasmyth, is the distinguished inventor of the steam hammer and other mechanical appliances. Born at Edinburgh on the 19th August 1808, he cherished from early youth a love of mechanism, and while yet a boy at school produced small steam-engines and other models, which found ready purchasers. In 1829 he proceeded to London, and there offered his services to Mr. Henry Maudsley, the celebrated engineer, who employed him as assistant in his private workshop. In 1831 he returned to Edinburgh, where he continued his engineering labours. He commenced business in Manchester in 1834, and afterwards, at Patricroft in that vicinity, constructed the important engineering works known as the Bridgewater Foundry. There the

¹ *Lights in Art*, by George William Novice, Edinb. 1874, 12mo, p. 311.

various mechanical inventions which bear his name were originally applied. From the firm of Nasmyth, Gaskell, & Co., of which he was the founder, he in 1857 retired with an ample fortune. He now resides on his fine estate at Penshurst, in the county of Kent. Ardently devoted to scientific pursuits, he has, by means of powerful telescopes, made extensive investigations into the structure and surface of the sun and moon. He is author of a work entitled *The Moon, considered as a Planet, a World, and a Satellite*.

Anne, one of the daughters of Alexander Nasmyth, became widely known as a painter; her landscapes are of a high commercial value.



WILLIAM NICOL.

THE only child of his parents, William Nicol was born in 1744 at Dumbretton, in the parish of Annan. His father, a poor but respectable tradesman, died early, leaving his widow and child without provision. From an itinerant teacher, named John Orr, young Nicol obtained the rudiments of learning. Orr was possessed of the scholastic faculty, but could not rest long in one place, a peculiarity which was explained by the belief that he had *laid a ghost*. In a popular rhyme an account of his interview with the spectre has been preserved. Having from the reputed exorciser obtained some acquaintance with Latin, Nicol conceived himself qualified to personally exercise the function of a teacher, and accordingly, when a mere lad, opened a school in his mother's house. In this he was encouraged by his mother, who, intending to train him for the ministry, believed that by instructing others he would

be inured to personal culture. After a time he attended classes in the grammar school of Annan, of which Dr. Robert Henry, the future historian, was then rector; and, having acquired a little money through private tuition, he was enabled to enter as a student the University of Edinburgh. At the close of the Arts curriculum he commenced the study of theology, when, availing himself of the privilege then open to theological students, of offering comments on the trial discourses of their class-fellows, he first evidenced that tone of acerbity which became the characteristic of his life. After a time he quitted the Divinity Hall, and adopted the study of medicine, which, after a brief trial, was also abandoned.

Devoted to classical studies, Mr. Nicol supported himself, while in attendance at college, by a tutorial practice. And when, early in 1774, the town council of Edinburgh resolved to fill, by means of a public competition, a vacant classical mastership in the High School, he entered as a candidate, and was, on the 2nd of February, declared to be the successful competitor. As a teacher Mr. Nicol became popular. Thoroughly master of his work, he contrived to interest his pupils in their studies; nor were violent ebullitions of temper, to which he was prone, sufficient to mar his acceptableness. At this early period he loved to recall the memory of his youth and early struggles, and to exercise toward young persons of ability and promise the hand of a generous encouragement. Familiar with the older ballads, he was also a reader of modern poetry. When Burns came to Edinburgh, he speedily sought his acquaintance. Struck by his earnest, forcible manner, and the vehemence with which he denounced insincerity and scourged dissimulation, the Poet gave him a hearty friendship. During his Border tour he addressed Mr. Nicol from Carlisle, on the 1st of June 1787, in a letter written in the broad vernacular. Saluting his correspondent as "Kind, honest hearted Willie," he describes his journeying in these words:—

I hae dander'd owre a' the kintra frae Dunbar to Selcraig, and hae for-gather'd wi' mony a guid fallow, and monie a weelfar'd hizzie. I met wi' twa dink quines in particular, ane o' them a sonsie, fine, fodgel lass, baith braw and bonnie; the tither was a clean-shankit, straught, tight, weel-far'd winch, as blithe's a lintwhite on a flowrie thorn, and as sweet and modest's a new-blawn plumrose in a hazel shaw. They were baith bred to mainers by the beuk, and onie ane o' them had as muckle smeddum and rumblegumption as the half o' some presbyteries that you and I baith ken. They play'd me sic a deevil o' a shavie that I daur say, if my harigals were turned out, ye wad see twa nicks i' the heart o' me like the mark o' a kail-whittle in a castock.¹

The Poet concludes by desiring to be remembered to Mrs. Nicol, to Mr. and Mrs. Cruikshank, and "the honest guidman o' Jock's Lodge," supposed to be Louis Cauvin, the French teacher.

On his returning to Mauchline in the summer of 1787, Burns communicated with Mr. Nicol with his former warmth. In a letter which is dated the 18th June, he commences "My Dear Friend," and in relation to his late Edinburgh visit and his present experiences, uses these words:—

I never, my friend, thought mankind very capable of anything generous; but the stateliness of the patricians in Edinburgh, and the servility of my plebeian brethren (who perhaps formerly eyed me askance) since I returned home, have nearly put me out of conceit altogether with my species. I have bought a pocket Milton, which I carry perpetually about with me, in order to study the sentiments—the dauntless magnanimity, the intrepid, unyielding independence, the desperate daring, and noble defiance of hardship, in that great personage, *Satan*.

¹ A translation may be convenient: "I have sauntered over the whole country from Dunbar to Selkirk, and have met with many a good fellow, and many a well-favoured maiden. I met two handsome girls, in particular, one of them a fine, plump, comfortable-looking lass, well-dressed and pretty; the other a well-limbed, straight, tight, well-favoured woman, as blithe as a linnet on a flowering thorn, and as sweet

and modest as a new-blown primrose in a hazel wood. They had both acquired manners from the book, and any one of them had as much smartness and sense as the half of some presbyteries that you and I know of. They played me so mischievous a prank, that if my viscera were turned out, you would see two nicks in the heart of me, like the mark of a knife in a cabbage-stalk."

In conclusion the Poet points to the frailty and uncertainty of friendship, adding :—

But from you, my ever dear sir, I look with confidence for the apostolic love that shall wait on me “through good report and bad report,”—the love which Solomon emphatically says “is strong as death.”

Returning to Edinburgh on the 7th of August, the Poet found that his former quarters were occupied, his friend Richmond having obtained another fellow-lodger. Consulting Mr. Nicol as to suitable apartments, he was invited to sojourn at his house, and there he became aware that his friend was the victim of a strong irritability. From Mr. Nicol's house he, on the 23rd August, communicated with Mr. Ainslie, then at Berrywell, in which he refers to his sitting in the same room with his host and some of his pupils. At the close of the High School session, it had been arranged that the friends should set out together on an excursion to the Highlands, and accordingly, on Saturday the 25th August, they left Edinburgh in a post-chaise. In his Diary of that date the Poet writes: “I leave Edinburgh for a northern tour, in company with my good friend Mr. Nicol, whose originality of humour promises me much entertainment.” Next day, in a letter to Mr. Robert Muir at Kilmarnock, he remarks of his travelling companion that he was “a truly original, but very worthy man.” Aware of his companion's weakness, the Poet had resolved to exercise towards him a generous forbearance. Introduced by Henry Mackenzie to Mrs. Rose at Kilravock, Burns was inclined to avail himself of an invitation to prolong his visit, but, in deference to Mr. Nicol's impatience, he hastened on his journey. A day or two later, at Fochabers, Mr. Nicol permitted his untoward temper to betray him into rudeness. Leaving Mr. Nicol at the inn, the Poet had proceeded to Gordon Castle to wait upon the Duchess of Gordon, to whom he had been

introduced at Edinburgh. When the Poet arrived the family were about to sit down to dinner, and he was, as matter of course, invited to take his place. Shortly after dinner he rose to depart, assigning as a reason that he had left his fellow-traveller at the inn. With much politeness the Duke at once offered to send a servant to conduct him to the castle, and when the Poet insisted on performing the office himself, a gentleman who was an intimate acquaintance of the Duke undertook to accompany him. When the Poet and the Duke's friend arrived at the inn, they found Mr. Nicol foaming with resentment. In the belief that he had been neglected, he had ordered the horses to be put to the carriage, and as no explanation or entreaty would induce him to change his purpose, the Poet was obliged to forego for the second time the happiness of passing a period of days in elevated and congenial society.

A tour of twenty-two days concluded, the travellers returned to Edinburgh on the 16th of September. Early in the following month the Poet accompanied his young friend, Dr. Adair, to the counties of Clackmannan and Stirling. On Monday the 15th of October he addressed from Ochtertyre complimentary letters both to Mr. Nicol and his High School colleague, Mr. William Cruikshank, and it is to be remarked that, in his communication to the former, he desires that his compliments may be conveyed to Mr. and Mrs. Cruikshank, as if unwilling that his jealous and irate friend should suppose that he was on terms of friendly correspondence with any other master of the school.

When Burns returned to Edinburgh from Clackmannanshire, he resided with Mr. Cruikshank. Between him and Mr. Nicol there may have been some little estrangement; if so, it was ephemeral. An unaddressed letter of the Poet, dated Mauchline, 7th March 1788, is supposed to have been intended for Mr. Nicol. In this communication the Poet remarks that, "that savage hospitality

which knocks a man down with strong liquors, is the devil."¹ In association with his correspondent, Burns was destined to present a different view. In 1789 Mr. Nicol spent his autumn vacation in the vicinity of Moffat. With his family he lodged at a place now known as Willie's Mill, near the road which leads from Moffat to St. Mary's Loch. As the vacation of the High School then extended from about the 12th of August to the 25th of September, Mr. Nicol must have in the interval resided at Willie's Mill. There the Poet visited him, in company with their common friend, Allan Masterton, who had been on a visit to Dalswinton. Experiencing a hearty reception and an exuberant hospitality, the guests evinced an abundant joyousness. Burns composed or adapted to the occasion the words of "Willie brew'd a peck o' maut," to which Masterton composed the air.²

By exercising an economy, rigid yet not parsimonious, Mr. Nicol acquired considerable opulence. On the 26th March 1790 he purchased from William Riddell of Commieston, W.S., the lands of Meikle and Little Laggan, in the barony of Snaid and parish of Glencairn. For these lands, which formed a part of the estate of Maxwellton, and consisted of 284 acres, Mr. Nicol paid about £1500.³ There was a small cottage on the property; and there, it is believed, Mr. Nicol and his family resided during his future vacations, the Poet being, so long as he remained at Ellisland, his frequent guest.

¹ Library edition of Burns's Works, iv. 337.

² Burns's Glenriddel Notes. It is all but certain that the Poet had adapted to the occasion of Nicol's festivities the words of a song which he had in a different connexion composed a year or two previously, of which the scene was laid at Willie's Mill, in the parish of Tarbolton, two of the heroes being William Muir, miller at the Mill of Fail, and Allan Guthrie, farmer

at Tarshaw, in the same neighbourhood. At Tarbolton a tradition, apparently well-founded, exists to this effect; but, as the Poet has personally fixed the song in connexion with his friend Nicol, the question may not be further reopened.

³ *Life and Works of Burns*, by Robert Chambers, Edin. 1852, vol. iii. p. 65.

Always ready to exercise his faculty in money-making, Mr. Nicol had, during his stay at Moffat, purchased a mare in an unthriving condition, under the belief that his poetical friend at Ellisland would be enabled to recruit its energies so that it might fetch a fair price at the next district fair. To oblige Mr. Nicol, the Poet received the animal at his farm, and used his best efforts to restore its health, but unsuccessfully. In a letter to the owner, dated February 9, 1790, he reported that, much to his vexation, the animal was dead. Yet the loss, he showed, was inconsiderable, since the highest offer he had received for it was fifty-five shillings. And, to soothe his friend's irritation on his loss, he concludes his letter by presenting four stanzas of humorous poetry. The verses commence thus:—

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
As ever trod on airn;
But now she's floating down the Nith,
And past the mouth o' Cairn.

When the Poet had been only about a year in the service of the Revenue, his promotion to a supervisorship was contemplated. Under the belief that this accession to his status and emoluments was near, Mr. Nicol, on the 13th August 1790, addressed to their common friend, Robert Ainslie, a characteristic letter:—

As to Burns, poor folks like you and I must resign all thoughts of future correspondence with him. To the pride of applauded genius is now superadded the pride of office. He was recently raised to the dignity of an examiner of Excise, which is a step preparative to attaining that of a *supervisor*. Therefore we can expect no less than that his language will become perfectly Horatian—"odi profanum vulgus et arceo." However, I will see him in a fortnight hence; and if I find that Beelzebub has inflated his heart like a bladder with pride, and given it the fullest distention that vanity can effect, you and I will burn him in

effigy, and write a satire as bitter as gall and wormwood against Government for employing its *enemies*, like North, to effect its purposes. This will be taking all the revenge in our power.

The Poet's promotion was delayed. Meanwhile he gave no indication of throwing aside the friendship of his habitually irate, yet, in his case, faithful associate. On the 9th April 1791 the Poet's wife gave birth to her third son; he was named William Nicol.

In his letter of August 1790 to Mr. Ainslie, Mr. Nicol had made jocular allusion to the Poet being an enemy of the Government. This allusion related solely to the Poet's occasional Jacobitism. But when, eighteen months later, it had become currently reported that the Poet had given countenance to the French patriots, he became seriously concerned for his friend's political safety, and so addressed to him a letter of remonstrance. That letter is not extant; but the Poet's rejoinder, dated 20th February 1792, sufficiently indicates its purport. That rejoinder is conceived in a strain of flippant rhapsody, alike unworthy of the Poet's genius and of the concern which had been evinced on his behalf. The Poet begins thus:—

O thou wisest among the wise, meridian blaze of prudence, full-moon of discretion, and chief of many counsellors! How infinitely is thy puddle-headed, rattle-headed, wrong-headed, round-headed, slave indebted to thy supereminent goodness, that from the luminous path of thy own right-lined rectitude, thou lookest benignly down on an erring wretch, of whom the zig-zag wanderings defy all the powers of calculation, from the simple copulation of units up to the hidden mysteries of fluxions! May one feeble ray of that light of wisdom which darts from thy sensorium, straight as the arrow of heaven, and bright as the meteor of inspiration,—may it be my portion, so that I may be less unworthy of the face and favour of that father of proverbs and master of maxims, that antipode of folly and magnet among the sages—the wise and witty Willie Nicol!

In two further paragraphs, conceived much in the same strain, Burns seems to resent Mr. Nicol's concern on his behalf. Happily

there was no breach of friendship. During the High School vacation of 1793, Messrs. Nicol and Masterton spent a week at Dumfries, for the purpose of enjoying the Poet's society. During the forenoon Burns was occupied with his official duties; but he dined with his friends daily in the Globe Tavern, and there also spent the evenings in their society.

These were times of hard drinking, and it is not uncertain that amidst the convivialities of the capital Mr. Nicol had contracted social habits particularly unsuited for one of his irascible temperament. When Lord Brougham attended the Edinburgh High School, in 1790-91, there was familiar among the pupils a rhythmical jargon, in which Mr. Nicol's supposed intemperance was depicted thus:—

Sandy Adam loves his book,
And so do Luke and Frango;
Willie Nicol loves his bottle,
And so does Crukemshango.¹

Long before Brougham's period, Mr. Nicol had been associated with an act of violence. Having experienced what he regarded as a public affront from the Rector, Dr. Adam, he, under cloud of night, waylaid him in the High School Wynd, and inflicted upon him serious injuries. Owing to lack of evidence, he escaped a criminal prosecution; but his guilt was generally credited in the school. By Sir Walter Scott, then a pupil of the High School, and in his tenth year, was devised a scheme of revenge. The classes of the several classical masters the Rector then inspected in rotation, and the master whose classes were examined in the interval took care of the Rector's. When Mr. Nicol, in his turn, came to teach Dr. Adam's class, the chief conspirator was prepared. The task which

¹ Dr. Alexander Adam was the celebrated Rector of the High School; "Luke" was Mr. Luke Fraser; "Frango" was Mr. James Fraser; and "Crukemshango" was Mr. William Cruikshank. — Lord Brougham's *Life and Times*, vol. i. p. 47.

the class had prescribed to them was that passage in the *Æneid* of Virgil, where the Queen of Carthage interrogates the court as to the stranger who had come to her habitation—

Quis novus hic hospes successit sedibus nostris ?

On a slip of paper Scott inscribed the Virgilian line, substituting *vanus* for *novus*, and then attached it by a pin to Mr. Nicol's coat, thereby exposing him to the ridicule of the school.¹

The act of assault took place in December 1782, and Mr. Nicol had made confession, also an apology, both to the Rector and to the town council as patrons of the school. But his exasperation was unallayed, and after an interval renewing the controversy, it became indifferent to him which and what number of his friends or associates were involved in his quarrel. Among those whom he sought to inveigle in the conflict were Burns and Mrs. M'Lehose. This is explained in the following letter from the Poet to his friend, Mr. Ainslie:—

MAUCHLINE, 23rd August 1788.

I received your last, my dear friend, but I write you just now on a vexatious business. I don't know if ever I told you some very bad reports that Mrs. M'—se once told me of Mr. Nicol. I had mentioned the affair to Mr. Cruikshank, in the course of conversation about our common friend, that a lady had said so and so, which I suspected had originated from some malevolence of Dr. Adam's. He had mentioned this story to Mr. Nicol cursorily, and there it rested, till now, prosecution has commenced between Dr. A— and Mr. N—, and Mr. N— has press'd me over and over to give up the lady's name. I have refused this; and last post Mr. N— acquaints me, but in very good natured terms, that if I persist in my refusal, I am to be served with a summons to compare and declare the fact.

Heaven knows how I should proceed! I have this moment wrote Mrs. M'—se, telling her that I have informed you of the affair; and I shall write Mr. Nicol by Tuesday's post that I will not give up my female friend till farther

¹ Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott*, Edin. 1850, 8vo, pp. 10, 30, 31.

consideration ; but that I have acquainted you with the business and the name ; and that I have desired you to wait on him, which I intreat, my dear sir, you will do ; and give up the name or not, as your and Mrs. M'—se's prudence shall suggest.

The quarrel between Mr. Nicol and the Rector had at length assumed aspects so formidable, that, in order to avoid further scandal, the municipal authorities, as patrons of the institution, felt called upon to again actively interfere. In the minutes of the town council we have the following narrative :—

25th January 1791.—The Lord Provost informed that the reason of calling this meeting of council was to take into consideration an interlocutor and report by the magistrates relative to the long dispute between the Rector and one of the subordinate masters of the High School, which had been laid before His Majesty's Advocate, Solicitor-General, and Extraordinary Assessor for the city. Then the said interlocutor and report was read, and is of the following tenor :—
“Edinburgh, 19th January 1791.—The magistrates having considered the different petitions of Doctor Alexander Adam, Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, answers for Mr. William Nicol, one of the masters of the said school, replies and duplies, with the proof adduced by the petitioner and the proof adduced by the respondent, memorial for Mr. Nicol, and hail procedure, find it proven that Mr. Nicol, as one of the subordinate masters of the said school, has been guilty of a verbal injury of a contumelious nature to Dr. Adam, as Rector, for which he ought to receive a severe reproof, with a proper certification, and report their opinion that the whole masters of the school shall be convened before the council assembled at a full meeting, that then a severe reproof shall be given to Mr. Nicol from the chair, intimating that in the event of future transgressions of the like nature, immediate dismissal from his office will be the consequence ; that in the event of any similar transgression in future, it is expected he will instantly complain to the patrons. Also that a proper and necessary subordination to the Rector be observed by all the other masters. That the Rector and other masters be directed to instruct the boys uniformly by Ruddiman's Grammar, and by no other. And that the council should adopt regulations for the good government of the school, and to appoint them strictly to be adhered to under penalty of dismissal.” Which report before engrossed, being considered by the council

they unanimously approved, and in addition thereto were of opinion that the Lord Provost should intimate to the Rector that his conduct was not altogether free from blame.

The minute, after referring to some general regulations in regard to the better administration of High School affairs, proceeds:—

Thereafter Doctor Adam, the Rector, and Mr. Nicol being called for, they appeared along with the other masters . . . The Lord Provost from the chair reprimanded Mr. Nicol in very severe terms, and intimated to him that immediate dismissal from his office would be the consequence of a future transgression of a similar nature.¹

An irate temper may not be allayed: hence Mr. Nicol again subjected himself to strong proceedings on the part of the magistrates and town council. From their minutes of the 18th March 1795, we learn that there was then received the report of a sub-committee in reference to further complaints by Dr. Adam against Mr. Nicol. The sub-committee recalled the fact that by Mr. Nicol “a gross assault had been made upon Dr. Adam on the street, in December 1782, which, by the intervention of two honourable gentlemen was made up, Mr. Nicol having acknowledged his fault in a letter publicly read in the High School.” The sub-committee further set forth that “after so heinous a fault, Mr. Nicol being forgiven, it was to have been expected that his future behaviour would have been circumspect.” But in 1790 “he had used contumelious language to Dr. Adam,” for which he was severely reprimanded and warned. Now Dr. Adam complained that Mr. Nicol had refused him admission into his class-room, and had announced that he was to open a class for private teaching, the object of which, Dr. Adam averred, was to deprive him of a portion of his fees. The council found that Mr. Nicol’s conduct in refusing admission to Dr. Adam

¹ Edinburgh Town Council Records, vol. cxvii. pp. 63, 64.

was highly censurable, and ordered him to abandon the school which he had set up after the last examination, under pain of dismissal.¹

Determined not to yield, Mr. Nicol resigned his office, and in September 1795 opened a private classical academy on the north side of the High Street, near the Cross. In his public advertisement he used these words :—

The business would be principally conducted in the language of Rome, a circumstance which gives a decided superiority to the grammar schools on the Continent over those of Great Britain. For the Latin language, proper principles premised, may be as easily and speedily acquired, by the constant habit of speaking it, as any modern one whatever ; though few in this country seek to advert to it.

In his new venture Mr. Nicol had very partial success, but he translated theses for medical students, and thereby supplemented his emoluments. Exhausted by controversy, and debilitated through social excesses, he died on the 21st April 1797. Some time before his death he purchased a place of family sepulture in the Calton burial-ground, extending to the breadth of five lairs, in the close vicinity of the Hume monument. In that spot his remains were interred.

For three years preceding his death the Poet seems to have ceased to regard Mr. Nicol as one with whom correspondence was profitable or safe.² While they were on terms of active friendship, he composed on Mr. Nicol the following jocose epitaph :—

¹ Town Council Records, vol. xv. fol. 118.

² Though warmly attached to Mr. Nicol, Burns was from the outset abundantly cognizant of his acerbity and waywardness. In a conversation with Professor Walker respecting him, in the Duke of Athole's grounds at Blair Athole

in 1787, the Poet remarked, " His mind is like his body ; he has a confounded strong in-kneed sort of a soul." Viewed in connexion with the history of his family, it is nearly certain that Mr. Nicol was not wholly a responsible agent.

Ye maggots, feed on Nicol's brain,
 For few sic feasts ye've gotten,
 Ye've got a prize o' Willie's heart,
 For deil a bit o't's rotten.

A copy of Burns's first Edinburgh edition is extant, thus inscribed, "To William Nicol, a man next after an only brother, the dearest friend of the Author."¹ The Poet also presented to Mr. Nicol a fine china punch-bowl, which, being greatly valued by him, was, after his death, placed by the members of his family in a handsome stand, to which his miniature portrait, painted on ivory, was neatly attached. The bowl was as an heirloom retained in Mr. Nicol's family, passing from one member to another. At length, owing to the owner's embarrassments, it fell into the hands of a gentleman in Newcastle, by whom it was sold to the Earl of Rosebery in August 1884.

William Nicol married a young English gentlewoman,² by whom he had seven children, four of whom died in childhood. The three survivors were a son, Edward, and two daughters, Margaret and Jane. In the Poet's letter to Mr. Nicol of the 9th February 1790, the son Edward is noticed thus: "I hope Ned is a good scholar, and will come out to gather nuts with me next harvest." Edward died in early manhood.

Jane, the younger daughter, laboured under cerebral disease, and was confined in a lunatic asylum at Musselburgh. Margaret, the elder daughter, born in 1781, married, 5th January 1802, the Rev. William Aitken, minister of Scone in Perthshire. Subsequent to her husband's death, which took place in 1832, Mrs. Aitken

¹ Now in the possession of ex-Bailie Colston of Edinburgh.

² A tradition obtains in the family that Mrs. Nicol's father was Mayor of Birmingham,

and that she was induced by Mr. Nicol to become his wife while she was being educated at a boarding-school.

removed to 3 Pilrig Place, Edinburgh, where she resided till her death, which took place on the 25th July 1859.

Of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Aitken were born two sons and two daughters. William Nicol, the elder son, practised as a physician at Sierra Leone. On the death of his mother he inherited the lands of Over and Nether Laggan, and, having returned to this country and settled at Penpont, he there died on the 17th May 1862. At his burial place in Glencairn churchyard a large obelisk, suitably inscribed, has been erected to his memory. By his wife, Elizabeth Betson, a native of England, he had two sons and two daughters.

Robert Nicol Aitken, the elder son, born in 1851, qualified himself as an engineer. At his majority in 1872 he succeeded to the estate of Laggan, acquired by his great-grandfather, which he afterwards sold for £8000, being £5000 in excess of the estimated value of the lands, when in 1859 they came into his father's possession.

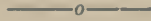
William Burns Aitken, the younger son, born in 1858, entered a silk-mercet's office in London. Amelia Kate Cope, the elder daughter, was born in 1853; Isabella Howat, the younger daughter, in 1856.

James Johnstone, younger surviving son of Mr. and Mrs. Aitken of the parish of Scone, was many years chief officer of the royal mail steamship *The British Queen*, sailing between New York and Havannah, and was afterwards chief officer on board the *Great Eastern*, when that vessel was engaged in laying out the Atlantic cable. Captain Aitken became mentally disordered; he died in a lunatic asylum at Liverpool. He married, without issue.

Margaret, elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Aitken of Scone, married Andrew Murray Buist, of the county of Lanark. Helen, younger daughter, married, 23rd February 1857, Alexander Brown,

farmer, Millhead, Moniaive, Dumfriesshire ; she died at Newcastle-on-Tyne, 8th June 1872.

In the churchyard of Ecclefechan Mr. William Nicol erected an altar tombstone in memory of his parents.



THE NIVEN FAMILY.

In the twenty-third volume of the Edinburgh Commissariat Register is recorded the testament and inventory of Andrew Neven of Monkriding in the parish of Kilwinning, who died on the 3rd December 1597 ; his "free gear," which is valued at £944, 17s., is bequeathed to his second son, Ninian, Thomas, the eldest son, receiving the family estate.

In the Bailie Court Book of Cunningham, "Thomas Neving" of Monkriding is named in 1636 as bailie-depute of Cunningham. In the Court Book Thomas Nevin of Monkriding is on the 16th June 1679 associated with Sir John Shaw of Greenock in a process of horning ; and in the same register is recorded a bond to John Montgomerie, younger of Brigend, for £100, granted on the 8th November 1638 by John Nevin of Overkirkwood.

Prior to the close of the seventeenth century, two or more brothers of the name, probably descendants of the families of Monkriding or Brigend, settled at Girvan as chapmen or itinerant vendors of portable wares. One of these brothers, John Niven, invested his savings in stocking a farm in the vicinity of Girvan. His son James, who became tenant at Ardlochan, in the parish of Kirkoswald, had four sons, James, William, John, and Robert. The two elder sons seem to have died young.

John, the third son, settled as a blacksmith at Damhouse of Ardlochan, in Kirkoswald parish. In Carrick he introduced wheel-carts of his own manufacture, in substitution for unwheeled sledges previously in use. He is the smith to whom the Poet, in "Tam o' Shanter," represents the irate wife of his hero as referring in these lines:—

That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on,
The smith and thee gat roarin' fou on.

John Niven had four sons, John, James, Robert, and Douglas; also four daughters, Jean (first), Jean (second), Joanna, and Janet.

James, the second son, born 20th September 1766,¹ became a blacksmith at the Maidens in Kirkoswald parish. He married his cousin, — Niven, with issue three sons, also several daughters. Robert, the eldest son, a forester, died at Kirkoswald about the year 1875; his several children emigrated to America. William, the second son, became a country blacksmith. David, the third son, settled as an ironworker in Glasgow, and attained opulence.

Robert, fourth son of James Niven, tenant at Ardlochan, rented the mill and farm of Ballochneil² in Kirkoswald parish. In "Tam o' Shanter," he is commemorated in these lines of Kate's vigorous denunciations:—

That ilka melder wi' the miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller.

Robert Niven married Margaret Ross, a native of Kintyre; she died on the 7th October 1799, at the age of eighty-six. Margaret, the eldest daughter, married Samuel Brown, the Poet's maternal

¹ Kirkoswald Parish Register.

² Ballochneil mill and farm homestead is situated on the Milton stream, formerly known as Corriston Burn, which, deriving its source from Craig Dow, a loch on the confines of the parish of Dailly, deposits its waters into the ocean about a mile to the south of Turn-

berry Castle. When resident at Ballochneil, Burns was in the habit of walking each morning along the bank of the Milton stream, between the hours of six and seven. When he made these walks solitarily he composed verses.

uncle, one of the workers on the farm, and whose household accommodation consisted of a small apartment which adjoined the mill-house.

John Niven, only son of Robert Niven and Margaret Ross, was born in 1754.¹ When, in the early summer of 1776, the Poet came to Kirkoswald, with the view of prosecuting his mathematical studies under Mr. Hugh Roger, the parochial schoolmaster, he had intended to lodge with his uncle, Samuel Brown, but, as his relative had only a single apartment, he was assigned a share of John Niven's bed in a small attic chamber of the farmhouse.

John Niven was by five years the Poet's senior, but they were pleased with each other's society, and cherished a close friendship. At Burns's suggestion his companion, with his father's permission, accompanied him to Mr. Roger's schoolhouse, in order to study mensuration, and otherwise to improve himself in mathematical learning.

The annual summer holiday of Kirkoswald school was observed on the first Thursday of July, the day of the annual horse-fair at Ayr; and the two students at Ballochneil resolved to improve the occasion by attempting a fishing expedition on the coast. They accordingly, at the small creek or harbour of the Maidens, embarked in the *Tam o' Shanter*, a small boat belonging to Douglas Graham of the Shanter farm, but when they had moved to some distance from the coast, they were assailed by a strong gale from the east. Such a gale implied danger, but when Niven proposed that they should steer shoreward, Burns objected, jocularly remarking that he would not abandon his purpose, though the breeze should prove strong enough to "blaw the horns off the kye" [cattle]. At length he yielded to the advice of his more experienced companion, and, reaching the shore, they effected a landing with some

¹ He was baptized on the 14th July 1754.—Kirkoswald Parish Register.

difficulty. Being now overtaken by a violent thunderstorm, accompanied by a heavy rainfall, they hastened for shelter to Shanter farmhouse, which stood near, and the occupants of which were on intimate terms with the Niven family. On reaching the homestead, they found that the farmer was absent at the horse-fair, but by his wife, Mrs. Graham, they were cordially welcomed.

As the storm continued, the friends remained till the evening. Careful and industrious as a domestic manager, Mrs. Graham indulged a querulous temper and spoke rashly. She expected her husband to return early in the evening, and, as he failed to present himself, she energetically expatiated on his convivial irregularities, and, among other untoward vaticinations, assured the young men that she apprehended that some day he would fall into the Doon. Mrs. Graham associated in her denunciation Johnnie Davidson, the neighbouring shoemaker, who, as she informed her visitors, had accompanied her husband to Ayr to purchase leather for soles, to be used with their home-tanned skins in providing shoes for the family.

In returning together to Ballochneil, Burns expatiated to his companion on the wanton censures of the gudewife, more especially in relation to her quaint expletives. Next morning he seized a newspaper which lay in the apartment, and on the margin inscribed some lines with a pencil; it was his first draft of "Tam o' Shanter." When, many years afterwards, Mr. Niven received a MS. copy of the poem from Mr. Aiken of Ayr, he read it to the farmer of Shanter, remarking that he was the hero. Unmoved by the striking descriptions, or even the allusions to his vituperative helpmate, Graham was content to remark that it "was a parcel o' lees, for he never owned a grey mare, or one named Meg—or any kind o' beast without a tail."

In August 1786, when the Poet visited Carrick to express an

adieu to his friends, and collect outstanding subscriptions for his poems, John Niven and Hugh Roger, the schoolmaster, had a social meeting with him at Maybole. The friends did not again meet.

John Niven succeeded his father in the lease of Ballochneil farm. Noted for his benevolence, he evinced considerateness and self-denial by bringing his meal into the market at Maybole, when, at a time of prevailing scarcity, the neighbouring farmers hoarded their produce, in the hope of still further enhancing the prices. In token of appreciation of his honourable conduct he received from the magistrates of Maybole the freedom of the burgh.

John Niven married, on the 29th July 1790, Jean Roger, only surviving daughter of the Kirkoswald schoolmaster, with issue one son and seven daughters. To Miss Janet Niven, a younger daughter, who died in Mahaar, Kirkeolm, Wigtownshire, on the 3rd May 1888, the writer owes much of his information in regard to the Kirkoswald families. John Niven died on the 31st October 1822, at the age of sixty-eight; his wife on the 17th January 1847, aged eighty-four.

One of the brothers, who settled as chapmen at Girvan, late in the seventeenth century, was William Niven. By a course of successful trading he acquired wealth, which he employed in stocking several small farms in the neighbourhood, which he took in lease. He had three sons, Adam, David, and Robert.

Adam Niven, the eldest son, leased the farm of Balchryston, near Culzean; he married, with issue. One of the sons, Charles Niven, was bailiff or land-steward on an estate in Oxfordshire; his granddaughter, the late Madame Sainton-Dolby, was a celebrated vocalist.

David Niven, the second brother, prosecuted merchandise at Maybole, and attained office in the magistracy. He had four sons, William, David, and two others. David and ——— settled in Jamaica, and largely prospered. They died unmarried. William,

the eldest son, born 24th February 1759,¹ received instruction from Mr. Hugh Roger, as a private pupil, at the time that the Poet and John Niven were also private students under Mr. Roger's roof. Struck by the brilliant humour of his new acquaintance, William Niven cultivated his friendship, and frequently conducted him on the Saturdays to his father's house at Maybole.

The intimacy thus formed was steadily maintained, and when, ten years afterwards, Burns issued proposals for printing his poems, he appealed to his Kirkoswald schoolfellow for aid in the subscription. William was now a merchant in Maybole in partnership with his father, and when, about the middle of August 1786, the Poet proceeded thither with the view of obtaining the subscription-money, William extended to him a cordial welcome. He entertained him at the King's Arms Hotel, bringing to meet him at supper some of the principal burgesses. On his return to Mossgiel the Poet communicated with William Niven in the following letter :—

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have been very throng ever since I saw you, and have not got the whole of my promise performed to you ; but you know the old proverb, “The break o’ a day’s no’ the break o’ a bargain.” Have patience and I will pay you all. I thank you with the most heartfelt sincerity for the worthy knot of lads you introduced me to. Never did I meet with as many congenial souls together, without one dissonant jar in the concert. To all and each of them make my most friendly compliments, particularly “Spunkie youth Tammie.” Remember me in the most respectful way to Bailie and Mrs. Niven, Mr. Dun, and the two truly worthy old gentlemen I had the honor of being introduced to on Friday ; tho’ I am afraid the conduct you forced me on may make them see me in a light I would fondly think I do not deserve. I will perform the rest of my promise soon. In the meantime remember this—never blaze my songs among the million, as I would abhor to hear every prentice mouthing my poor performances in the streets. Every one of my Maybole friends is welcome to

¹ Maybole Parish Register.

a copy if they chuse; but I don't wish them to go farther. I mean it as a small mark of my respect for them, a respect as sincere as the love of dying saints.—I am ever, my dear William, your obliged,

MOSSGIEL, 30th August 1786.

ROBERT BURNS.¹

“Spunkie youth Tammie” was Thomas Piper, who then acted as professional assistant to Dr. Hugh Logan, a physician in Maybole; he emigrated to Jamaica, and there died. The “Bailie” and “Mrs. Niven” were his correspondent’s parents. “Mr. Dun,” or Dunn, was the parish schoolmaster; he died on the 5th July 1810, at the age of fifty-one.²

William Niven succeeded his father in the lands of Kirkland Hill. He also attained an important accession to his fortune by succeeding to the estates of his two brothers in Jamaica, who died unmarried. His personal property was latterly estimated at not less than £100,000. He became noted for his parsimony.³ He died on the 13th December 1844, at the advanced age of eighty-five.⁴

William Niven espoused, in 1796, Isabella Goudie, a native of Maybole; she died 15th February 1841.⁵ His marriage being without issue, Mr. Niven settled his fortune on Charlotte, only child of Hugh Hutchison of Southfield, Renfrewshire, grand-daughter of his brother, Dr. Niven of Middlebie in Dumfriesshire. This lady married, in 1832, Sir Thomas Montgomerie Cunninghame of Corshill, and had issue the present baronet and other children. Lady Montgomerie Cunninghame has since added Niven to her family name. She became a widow in 1870.

Robert Niven, third son of William Niven, chapman and farmer

¹ The original of this letter is now in the possession of Mr. Rennie, banker, Maybole.

² Tombstone in Maybole Churchyard.

³ For William Niven the Poet originally intended his “Epistle to a Young Friend,” but

he changed his intention, owing to his being informed that his early companion was pervaded by the single idea of how to become rich.

⁴ Tombstone in Maybole Churchyard.

⁵ *Ibid.*

at Girvan, settled in that place as a general merchant. He entered the town council, and attained office in the magistracy. He married Agnes Stevenson, grand-daughter of John Stevenson, a sufferer for the Covenant, and whose memorials of himself, entitled *A Soul-Strengthening and Comforting Cordial*, have been frequently reprinted. In issuing from the press in 1729 the first edition of these memorials,¹ the editor, Mr. William Cupples, minister of Kirkoswald, describes the writer as "the most eminently pious man he ever knew;" he adds that "his life was a life of prayer, meditation, and holiness." From his youth impressed seriously, Stevenson consecrated his energies to the cause of Presbytery; and, though occupying no higher status than that of an agricultural labourer, he was, by the local abettors of a despotic Government, selected for prosecution. About the year 1679 his father's house at Dailly was surrounded by a party of dragoons, five of their number being quartered on the household. In this manner his seizure was contemplated, but he eluded the vigilance of his pursuers. During a subsequent winter he and his young wife preserved their freedom by taking shelter under a haystack. For a time his wife and sister were, under the charge of rebellion, committed to the prison of Maybole. He ascribes his own preservation from arrest to the frequency and fervour of his devotions. Long surviving the times of persecution, he died in 1728, at an advanced age.

Bailie Robert Niven died at Girvan on the 2nd December 1807, at the age of seventy-nine; his wife, Agnes Stevenson, died 27th December 1810, in her ninetieth year.

Of the marriage of Robert Niven and Agnes Stevenson were born two sons, Alexander and Robert; also two daughters, Janet and

¹ "A Rare Soul-Strengthening and Comforting Cordial for Old and Young Christians, &c., by John Stevenson, land-labourer in the parish

of Dailly, who died in the year 1728," 1729, 12mo.

Agnes. Alexander, the elder son, was baptized in February 1760.¹ He was a day-boarder with Hugh Roger at Kirkoswald when the Poet was resident in the place. The lads became intimate.

Afterwards tutor in the family of Mr. Hamilton of Sundrum in the parish of Coylton, which borders that of Mauchline, Alexander Niven renewed his acquaintanee with the Poet by visiting him at Mossgiel. One afternoon he arrived at Mossgiel to invite the Poet to forthwith join a party of friends. Burns, who was in the barn thrashing grain, remarked that he could not leave his work unfinished, but that if his friend would assist him in completing it, he would thereafter attend to his summons. Mr. Niven readily complied; and when the grain was duly cleansed and stacked for market, the friends proceeded to Coylton.

Having studied theology at the University of Glasgow, Alexander Niven was, on the 4th October 1786, licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Ayr. As he was still resident at Sundrum, he begged the Poet that he would not attend any service conducted by him until he had acquired some ministerial experience. Burns accordingly abstained from becoming his auditor when he conducted service at Coylton and Mauchline; but, learning that he was to preach elsewhere, he slipped quietly into a pew, where he hoped that his presence would be unobserved. For a time the preacher did not discover him; but when he did he became confused, and, as he was preaching without notes, felt compelled to abruptly finish his discourse.²

Mr. Niven was, on the 18th July 1793, ordained minister of Dunkeld. Distinguished for his theological learning, he, in 1816, received the degree of D.D. from the University of St. Andrews.

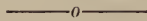
¹ Girvan Parish Register. Owing to a blemish in the record, the precise date of baptism is not apparent.

who does not, however, give the preacher's name. We have related the story as we received it from the preacher's grandson.

² The anecdote is related by Professor Walker,

He died on the 3rd November 1833, in his seventy-fourth year. He married, 5th May 1794, Susanna Stewart, elder daughter of Captain Dick of Auchnagee, and aunt of the distinguished Sir Robert Dick of Tullymet; she died 31st March 1834. Of the marriage were born six sons and a daughter. Humphry Dick, the eldest son, an assistant surgeon in the Indian army, was killed in the attack upon Nagpore; William, the third son, died in India; John Dick, the fourth son, was born blind; Robert, the fifth son, became a Writer to the Signet; Charles Murray, the sixth son, succeeded to the living of Dunkeld, and died in 1835.

Alexander Niven, second son of the Rev. Dr. Alexander Niven and Susanna Dick, was, in 1825, ordained minister of Balfron. By his wife Eliza, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Brown, one of the ministers of Glasgow, he had issue four sons, Alexander, Thomas Brown, William, and Frederick; also a daughter, Eliza Susanna.



THOMAS ORR.

AMONG the Poet's comrades at Kirkoswald was Tom Orr, a lad of his own age. His father, William Orr, occupied a small cottage on the farm of Park near Ballochneil, and was employed as an agricultural labourer, and his mother, Jean Robinson, was a daughter of that Julia Robinson who was reputed as a witch. Intending to be a sailor, Tom was a student of navigation in Mr. Hugh Roger's school at the time the Poet and John Niven were there prosecuting their studies in mensuration and geometry. He next appears as harvesting at Lochlea in September 1780.¹ And in August 1781 he

¹ Library edition of Burns's Works, iv. 363.

FACSIMILE
OF A LETTER BY WILLIAM BURNES
THE POET'S FATHER TO THOMAS ORR
3rd AUGUST 1781.

Thomas

I want you to ^{see} the

gift for me begun on Tuesday Day
I was in spirit and bring her's

John's wife is same

perhaps 3 aquets

to your heart's content by Monday

to our wheat - my wife
could have her Brothers

Yours &c

William Burnes

was again summoned by William Burnes to assist him in harvest. His note of summons, herewith presented in fac-simile, proceeds thus :—

THOMAS,—I want you to be here to your harvest by Monday first, for we begin on Teusday to our wheat. My wife desires enquire, and bring her word how her brother John's wife is.—I am, yours, etc.,

WILLIAM BURNES.

LOCHLIE, 3rd August [1781].

On returning to Kirkoswald at the end of harvest 1781, Orr carried from the Poet complimentary messages to various persons in the locality, including his old flame, Peggy Thomson. And on the 30th October Tom addressed his former schoolfellow in a rhyming epistle. His verses are much too doggerel for quotation, save in the concluding couplet, in which he remarks :—

This is sent a present from
Your ever [faithful] servant, Tom.

In reply to Orr's rhyme, the Poet, evidently in allusion to his attempting business as a flax-dresser, writes thus :—

What is't to me a passenger,—God wot,
Whether my vessel be first rate or not ?
The ship itself may make a better figure,
But I who sail am neither less nor bigger.¹

In a letter to Thomas Orr, now for the first time printed,² dated Lochlie, September 7th [1782], the Poet writes :—

DEAR SIR,—I have been designed to write to you of a long time, but was at a loss for a direction, as I am ignorant what place of the country you are in. I have nothing to tell you of news ; for myself, I am going on in my old way, taking as light a burden as I can, of the cares of the world ; studying men, their manners and their ways, as well as I can. Believe me, Tom, it is the only study

¹ The Poet's letter which includes these lines is in the possession of Mr. John Westwood Oliver of London.

² Also in fac-simile in vol. i.

in this world will yield solid satisfaction. To be rich and to be great are the grand concerns of this world's men, and to be sure, if moderately pursued, it is laudable, but where is it moderately pursued? The greater part of men grasp at riches as eagerly as if poverty were but another word for damnation and misery, whereas I affirm that the man whose only wish is to become great and rich, whatever he may appear to be, or whatever he may pretend to be; at the bottom he is but a miserable wretch. Avoid this sordid turn of mind if you would be happy. Observe mankind around you; endeavour by studying the wisdom and prudence of some, and the folly and madness of others, to make yourself wiser and better. I hope you will write me soon, and tell me what your mind is employed in, what your studies principally are; and believe me that you may be wise and virtuous, generous and humane, is the sincere wish of your friend,

ROBT. BURNES.¹

LOCHLIE, *September 7th.*

To a letter from Orr in the autumn of 1784, informing him that Peggy Thomson was about to be wedded to the young farmer at Minnybee, the Poet answered thus:—

DR THOMAS,—I am much obliged to you for your last letter, tho' I assure you the contents of it gave me no manner of concern. I am at present so ——— taken in with an affair of gallantry, that I am very glad Peggy is off my hand, as I am at present embarrassed enough without her. I don't choose to enter into particulars in writing, but never was a poor rakish rascal in a more pitiful taking. I should be glad to see you to tell you the affair, meanwhile I am, your friend,

ROBERT BURNES.²

MOSSGAVIL, *11th November 1784.*

About the year 1785, Orr, who had hitherto assisted his father as a field labourer, fulfilled a long-cherished intention of becoming a seaman. He was drowned in his first voyage.

¹ This letter is clearly to be ascribed to the year 1782. In the MS. the original signature "Burnes" has by another hand been converted into Burns; the four last letters, *urns*, having been written over in a heavier hand.

² This letter is printed for the first time in the Library edition of Burns's Works, edited by William Scott Douglas, vol. iv. pp. 50, 51.

COLONEL ARENT SCHUYLER DE PEYSTER.

THE Huguenot family of De Peyster, exiled from France during the religious persecutions of Charles IX., found refuge in Holland. Johannes de Peyster, a member of the family, and a native of Haarlem, emigrated to America along with his wife Cornelia Lutters, and about the year 1652 settled at New Amsterdam, as the city of New York was then designated. Engaging in merchandise, he greatly prospered, and, after holding different municipal offices, was in 1677 elected Mayor of New York, but he declined the office owing to his imperfect acquaintance with the English tongue. Descendants of Johannes de Peyster acquired settlements in New York State ;¹ also in other parts of the American continent.

A scion of the New York family, the subject of the present memoir, held a military command at Detroit, Michilimackinac, and several other localities during the Seven Years' War, and in this connexion distinguished himself by detaching the Indians from the service of the French. He also served in other parts of North America under his uncle, Colonel Schuyler, and latterly obtained command of the 8th Regiment. Retiring from his military duties at an advanced age, he established his residence at Mavis Grove, near Dumfries. The colonel married early in life Rebecca, one of the two daughters of David Blair, who from 1790 to 1792 was Provost of Dumfries. Mrs. de Peyster's only sister was wife of John M'Murdo, chamberlain at Drumlanrig, on whose introduction the Poet, on coming from Ellisland to Dumfries, found in the veteran of many wars an associate particularly to his liking. For the colonel not only possessed the generous warmth common to persons of his

¹ *Contemporary Biography of New York*, vol. i. 393.

profession, but he was actuated by a fine poetical sensibility, and composed verses of no inconsiderable merit.¹

During the movement for the national defence consequent on the menaces of the Revolution Government of France, Colonel de Peyster took a prominent part in embodying at Dumfries two companies of volunteers, and of these he was, on the 24th March 1795, appointed major commandant. Among those who joined his corps was the Poet, who, in honour of the movement, composed his ode, beginning, "Does haughty Gaul invasion threat?" When, in the course of that illness which terminated in his death, the Poet received some kind inquiries from the colonel as to his health, he replied in these verses:—

My honor'd colonel, deep I feel
Your interest in the poet's weal ;
Ah ! now sma' heart hae I to speel

The steep Parnassus,
Surrounded thus by bolus pill
And potion glasses.

O what a canty warld were it,
Would pain and care and sickness spare it ;
And fortune favor worth and merit

As they deserve ;
An aye a rowth roast beef and claret ;
Syne wha wad starve ?

Dame Life, though fiction out may trick her,
And in paste gems and frippery deck her ;

Oh ! flickering, feeble, and unsicker

I've found her still,
Aye wavering like the willow-wicker,
'Tween good and ill.

¹ M'Dowall's *Memorials of St. Michael's Churchyard*, pp. 161, 162. Unknown to each other, the field-officer and the Poet engaged in a poetical controversy, which was conducted in the columns of the *Dumfries Journal*.

But lest you think I am uncivil
To plague you with this draunting drivel,
Abjuring a' intentions evil,
I quat my pen.
The Lord preserve us frae the devil,
Amen ! Amen.

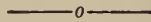
On the 26th July 1796, when the Poet's remains were consigned to St. Michael's Churchyard, Colonel de Peyster attended in command of his body of volunteers. He was then about the age of seventy, and he survived the Poet twenty-six years. On the occasion of his funeral, his fellow-townsmen testified their respect by attending in large numbers. On a monument raised at his grave in St. Michael's Churchyard is the following inscription :—

Sacred to the memory of Arent Schuyler de Peyster of Mavis Grove, who died on the 26th of November 1822, at a very advanced age, of which upwards of sixty years were devoted to the service of his king and country. He was no less distinguished by his loyalty and honourable principles than by the cordiality of his manners, and the warmth and sincerity of his friendships ; and his memory will long be cherished and revered by those who enjoyed the happiness of his acquaintance. Of the Christian humility of his mind, a fair estimate may be formed from the following simple lines, written by him within a week of his death :—

Raise no vain structure o'er my grave—
One simple stone is all I crave ;
To say beneath a sinner lies
Who died in hopes again to rise,
Through Christ alone, to be forgiven
And fitted for the joys of heaven.

In relation to Colonel de Peyster, the *Dumfries Courier*, in an obituary notice, presented the following anecdote. When George IV. was on his visit to Scotland in 1822, he asked the Marquis of Queensberry whether his old friend, the colonel, was

still alive. Replying in the affirmative, the Marquis explained that nothing but the advanced age and growing infirmities of his wife would have prevented him from repairing to Holyrood on so interesting an occasion. "Well," said the King, "I am sorry for it; they must be truly a venerable couple, for one of my earliest remembrances is that I danced *Monymusk* with Mrs. de Peyster." The King referred to the period when, about 1778, he had, as Prince of Wales, visited Plymouth, when the garrison of the place was under the colonel's command. Tall in person, Colonel de Peyster presented a fine, soldier-like bearing, and his manners were gentle and conciliatory.



JOHN RAMSAY OF OCHTERTYRE.

IN the year 1591, one of the portioners of the lands of Ochertyre, in the parish of Kincardine-in-Menteith, near Stirling, was named Ramsay, and in the valuation of Perthshire of 1649, James Ramsay is entered as possessing "the two parts of Ochertyre, valued at £105, 6s. 8d." On the 5th November 1697, John Ramsay, portioner of Ochertyre, acquired by purchase an additional share of the Ochertyre estate.¹ His son practised at Edinburgh as a Writer to the Signet, and by his wife, a daughter of Ralph Dundas of Manor,² and niece of Bishop Burnet, had a son, John. This gentleman, who forms the subject of the present memoir, was born in Edinburgh on the 26th August 1736. After an elementary training in the classics under Mr. Barclay, a teacher of reputation at Dalkeith, he entered as

¹ Perthshire Register of Sasines, vol. xi. fol. 426.

² Another daughter of Mr. Ralph Dundas

was wife of George Abereromby of Tullibody, and mother of Sir Ralph Abereromby.

a student the University of Edinburgh, and, selecting the legal profession, passed as an advocate. But the death of his father, while he was still under age, led him to forego his prospects at the Bar, and to engage wholly in rural pursuits. Though he now made the country his stated home, he continued to pass the winters at Edinburgh, and there his classical tastes gave him access to the best literary society. With Lord Kames he became a special favourite; he was also on terms of intimacy with Dr. Gleig, Bishop of Brechin, editor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. But his more cherished companions were Dr. Macleod, Professor of Church History at Glasgow, and Dr. David Doig, Rector of the High School of Stirling. As a private tutor at Eton, Professor Macleod had become conversant with the niceties of Latin versification, and Dr. Doig was no less remarkable for his intimate familiarity with the ancient classics; consequently Mr. Ramsay conducted with them a classical correspondence, while their personal conversations were occasionally conducted in the Roman tongue. Mr. Ramsay further gratified his classical predilections by adorning his demesne with sculptured tablets, bearing Latin inscriptions.¹

When Burns was sojourning at Harvieston in October 1787, he visited Mr. Ramsay at Ochertyre, having some time previously been introduced to his notice by Dr. Blacklock. Writing to William Nicol from Ochertyre, in Strathearn, on the 15th October, the Poet remarks: "I called at Mr. Ramsay's of Auchertyre as I came up the country, and am so delighted with him, that I shall certainly accept of his invitation to spend a day or two with him as I return." And in a letter despatched on the same day to Mr. William Cruikshank, he writes, "I leave this place, I suppose, on Wednesday, and shall

¹ In the year 1777 Mr. Ramsay was associated with Dr. Samuel Johnson and Professor George Stuart of Edinburgh in preparing the Latin

inscription for the monument of Dr. Tobias Smollett, then reared on the banks of the Leven.

devote a day to Mr. Ramsay of Auchtertyre, near Stirling,—a man to whose worth I cannot do justice.”

In the course of a southern tour, Mr. Ramsay visited the Poet at Ellisland. In relation to his visit, he communicated to Dr. Currie the following narrative :—

I had an adventure with Burns in the year 1790, when passing through Dumfriesshire on a tour to the south, with Dr. Stewart of Luss. Seeing him pass quickly near Closeburn, I said to my companion, “That is Burns.” On coming to the inn, the ostler told us he would be back in a few hours to grant permits; that when he met with anything seizable he was no better than any other gauger; in everything else that he was perfectly a gentleman. After leaving a note to be delivered to him on his return, I proceeded to his house, being curious to see his Jean, etc. I was much pleased with his *uxor Sabina qualis*, and the Poet’s modest mansion, so unlike the habitation of ordinary rustics. In the evening he suddenly bounced in upon us, and said, as he entered, “I come, to use the words of Shakespeare, stewed in haste.” In fact he had ridden incredibly fast after receiving my note. We fell into conversation directly, and soon got into the *mare magnum* of poetry. He told me that he had now gotten a story for a drama, which he was to call “Rob Macquechan’s Elshon,” from a popular story of Robert Bruce being defeated on the water of Cairn, when, the heel of his boot having loosened in his flight, he applied to Robert Macquechan to fix it, who, to make sure, ran the awl nine inches up the King’s heel. We were now going on at a great rate, when Mr. Stewart popped in his head, which put a stop to our discourse, that had become very interesting. Yet in a little while it was resumed, and such were the force and versatility of the Bard’s genius, that he made the tears run down Mr. Stewart’s cheeks, albeit unused to the poetic strain.¹

Among the associates of Mr. Ramsay’s latter years was Sir Walter Scott. In 1790, shortly after being called to the Bar, Scott

¹ The Rev. Dr. John Stewart, minister of Luss, was distinguished as the translator of the Old Testament Scriptures into Gaelic. In acknowledgment of this service, he received a Treasury grant of £1000, also the special thanks of the

General Assembly. Dr. Stewart was an eminent botanist, and was otherwise remarkable for his scientific attainments. He died 24th May 1821, in the seventy-eighth year of his age and forty-eighth of his ministry.

made a visit to Ochtertyre, and when, in 1796, he published his translations of "Ballads from Burger," he sent a copy to Mr. Ramsay. In acknowledging the gift Mr. Ramsay remarked, "I meet with little poetry now-a-days that touches my heart; but your translations excite mingled emotions of pity and terror." According to Lockhart, the laird of Ochtertyre, together with George Constable and Clerk of Eldin, suggested to the great novelist his character of "Jonathan Oldbuck."

Latterly Mr. Ramsay was afflicted with blindness, but under the deprivation he derived some comfort by composing Latin hexameters. He died at Ochtertyre on the 2nd March 1814, and his remains were deposited in the old church of Kincardine-in-Menteith. In the new church of that parish a monument has been erected to his memory, bearing the following inscription, composed by himself:—

Vitæ mortalis finem anticipans
 Hoc epitaphium a seipso factum
 Tumulo inscribi jussit
 Joannes Ramsay de Ochtertyre.
 Suspirare agricolæ, ne gravemini!
 Erat enim vester amicus
 Qui benevolentiæ forsum erroribus
 Satis superque indulgebat.
 Equi enim pinguitudine vel senio
 Nunquam nimio labore absumebantur.
 Vetulum, servum, opificemve,
 Eorumque viduas
 Aspicere, alloqui, fovere,
 Illi admodum placebat.
 Colonos lætos, industrios avitos
 Majori vectigali sciens prætulit.
 Juventæ sodales! At pauci superstites!
 Vobis poma, vel epistolas mittere
 Illi vero umbratili, erat pro negotiis.

En ipse qui aliorum marmora
 Pie inscribere solebat
 Vobis e sepulchro supremum dicit vale !
 O, si dolore, morbo, morte, feliciter devictis,
 Amicitia in terris inchoata
 Fiat cœlestis amor !
 Præivit—vos sequemini !

Obiit VI. Non. Mart. MDCCCXIV ætat. 77.

Ramsay lived and died a bachelor ; but the writer was informed by his friend, Dr. David Irving, that it was understood he was engaged to a young lady who lost her life by the fall of the North Bridge of Edinburgh on the 3rd August 1769, when other four persons were also overwhelmed in the ruins.

Apart from his classical recreations, Mr. Ramsay employed a portion of his time in making extensive notes of his reading, recollections, and experiences, which, under distinct heads, he embodied in ten large MS. volumes. A compilation of their more important contents, prepared by Mr. Alexander Allardyce, was issued by him in 1888 in two thick octavo volumes, under the title of *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*. And this work, though not an exhaustive performance, is, in respect of the author's observations on contemporary manners and his recollections of notable contemporaries, a not unimportant contribution to the national history.

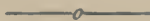
By testamentary settlement, Mr. Ramsay bequeathed his estate to his cousin-german, James Dundas. Mr. Dundas was succeeded by his son, the Right Honourable Sir David Dundas, Q.C., at whose death, on the 30th March 1877, the estate passed to his nephew, a son of Lord Manor, a military officer, who was killed in India. In the estate this gentleman was succeeded by his twin brother, Captain Dundas of the Royal Navy, the present owner.

JOHN RANKINE.

ONE of the Poet's associates at Lochlea was John Rankine, who leased the neighbouring farm of Adamhill. Rankine was, when the Poet formed his acquaintance, about his fiftieth year, and the father of a family advancing into maturity. Eminently social and fond of merriment, he was in the habit of indulging his humour by quaint and curious narratives in the form of dreams. To that peculiarity of his jocund neighbour, and another, less pardonable,—that of stealthily intoxicating an austere religious professor,—the Poet refers in a poetical epistle beginning, "O rough, rude, ready-witted Rankine."

By the Poet the farmer at Adamhill was addressed in two other rhyming compositions; the former an epistle beginning, "I am a keeper of the law," and an epitaph commencing, "Ae day, as Death, that gruesome carl."

Anne, youngest daughter of John Rankine, was heroine of the Poet's song, "The Rigs o' Barley." She married John Merry, inn-keeper, Cumnock, and died on the 20th August 1843, having survived her husband forty-one years. With her husband and five sons she is commemorated on a family tombstone in Cumnock Churchyard. Though in her modes somewhat severe and rigid, she warmly cherished the Poet's memory, and rejoiced to sing the song which had made her famous.



JOHN RICHMOND.

THE family of Richmond in Ayrshire is of some antiquity. In the parish churchyard of Galston two martyred Covenanters of the

name are monumentally commemorated. One of these, Andrew Richmond, is on his tombstone described as "killed by bloody Graham of Claverhouse in June 1679 for his adherence to the word of God and Scotland's covenanted work of reformation." Respecting the other, John Richmond, younger of Knowe, it is set forth that he was executed at the Cross of Glasgow, on the 19th March 1684, his remains being interred in the High Churchyard of that city. To some unknown parish in Ayrshire Donald Richmond, who graduated at the University of Glasgow in 1644, was admitted after 1662. Having accepted Episcopal ordination, after professing himself a strict Presbyterian, he became deeply dejected, and died comfortless.¹ James Richmond, who at the University of Glasgow graduated in 1665, was, on the 27th March 1688, ordained minister of St. Quivox; he died in 1700, in the twelfth year of his ministry.²

A scion of the Ayrshire family, James Richmond, was born in 1744. Licensed to preach in 1769, he was ordained to the ministerial charge of Irvine on the 15th March 1774. In 1782 he, after examining the Poet as to his scriptural knowledge, admitted him to the holy communion. In 1800 he received the degree of D.D. from the University of Glasgow. He died on the 16th July 1804, at the age of sixty.³ One of his two sons, John, was for many years minister of the parish of Southdean, in the county of Roxburgh.

A younger son of the laird of East Montgarswood, in the western district of Sorn, John Richmond was born in that parish in 1765. Educated at the school of Newmilns, he, about his seventeenth year, became a clerk in the chambers of John and Gavin Hamilton, writers in Mauchline. The Poet, when he formed the intimacy of Gavin Hamilton, also cherished the acquaintance of his clerk, whom he found a vigorous reader, and eminently social. At an early stage of their friendship Richmond made the Poet known

¹ *Fasti Eccl. Scot.*, ii. 149.

² *Ibid.* ii. 137.

³ *Ibid.* ii. 155.

to James Smith, a young draper in the place, and the three proceeded to form a club, which met at the Whitefoord Arms, under the jocose appellative of "The Court of Equity." Of this socio-juridical conclave the Poet was constituted President, James Smith Procurator-Fiscal, and John Richmond Clerk of Court. A fourth member was added, William Hunter, an intelligent shoemaker, who was constituted Messenger-at-Arms.

In the Cowgate, a narrow street nearly opposite the entrance gate of Mauchline Churchyard, a humble dwelling, occupied by a Mrs. Gibson, familiarly known as "Poosie Nancy," was used by her as a tavern, also as a lodging-house for vagrants and peddlars of the lowest class. The Whitefoord Arms, in which assembled the fun-loving members of the Court of Equity, stood in another street, but only a few yards distant from Poosie Nancy's cottage. Returning one evening from their usual howff, Burns and his friends Smith and Richmond were attracted by the more than wonted uproar in Nancy's dwelling. Knocking at the door, they were allowed admission, and, having made a pecuniary contribution, were permitted to witness the rough and boisterous hilarity. On what the friends had witnessed at Poosie Nancy's that evening the Poet founded his cantata of "The Jolly Beggars." He read the poem to Richmond a few days after witnessing the scenes on which it is founded. Richmond was at this time reputed to be wild, heedless, and fond of company.¹ Consequent on an illicit amour which, in January 1785, brought him under the censure of the kirk-session, he obtempered the sentence of the court by appearing three separate Sundays as a penitent before the congregation.² Oppressed by the affront, he, at the close of his apprenticeship in November 1785, left the place and

¹ William Patrick's *Recollections*. See *Robert Burns at Mossgiel*, by William Jolly, F.R.S.E., 1881, p. 74.

² Mauchline Kirk-session Register.

removed to Edinburgh. For three months thereafter he ceased to communicate with his friends at Mauchline, and when afterwards the Poet received a letter from him, he ascribed his silence to his inauspicious fortune. To his letter the Poet replied in these terms :—

MOSSGIEL, 17th February 1786.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have not time at present to upbraid you for your silence and neglect; I shall only say I received yours with great pleasure. I have enclosed you a piece of rhyming ware for your perusal. I have been very busy with the Muses since I saw you, and have composed, among several others, “The Ordination,” a poem on Mr. M’Kinlay’s being called to Kilmarnock; “Scotch Drink,” a poem; “The Cotter’s Saturday Night;” an “Address to the Devil,” etc. I have likewise completed my poem on the “Dogs,” but have not shown it to the world. My chief patron now is Mr. Aiken in Ayr, who is pleased to express great approbation of my works. Be so good as send me Fergusson,¹ by Connel, and I will remit you the money. I have no news to acquaint you with about Mauchline; they are just going on in the old way. I have some very important news with respect to myself, not the most agreeable—news I am sure you cannot guess, but I shall give you the particulars another time. I am extremely happy with Smith; he is the only friend I have now in Mauchline. I can scarcely forgive your long neglect of me, and I beg you will let me hear from you regularly by Connel. If you would act your part as a friend, I am sure neither good nor bad fortune should estrange or alter me. Excuse haste, as I got yours but yesterday.—I am, my dear sir, yours,

ROBT. BURNES.

In his next letter, dated Mossgiel, 9th July 1786, the Poet breathes a warmer friendship. His former associate had been an invalid, and he begins by sympathizing with him. He writes :—

MY DEAR FRIEND,—With the sincerest grief I read your letter. You are truly a son of misfortune. I shall be extremely anxious to hear from you how your health goes on; if it is any way re-establishing, or if Leith promises well; in short, how you feel in the inner man.

¹ Robert Fergusson’s Poems.

After detailing some ephemeral gossip, and referring to his own negotiations with the Armour family, and with the kirk-session of Mauchline, he concludes by informing him that his "book will be ready in a fortnight."

The Poet's next letter to Mr. Richmond is dated 30th July 1786, and is written from "Old Rome Forest," in the neighbourhood of Kilmarnock, where he was then visiting one of his relations. He begins:—

MY DEAR RICHMOND,—My hour is now come—you and I will never meet in Britain more. I have orders within three weeks at farthest to repair aboard the *Nancy*, Captain Smith, from Clyde to Jamaica, and to call at Antigua. This, except to our friend Smith, whom God long preserve, is a secret about Mauchline.

The Poet's intention of leaving the country was not realized, and when he set out for Edinburgh in quest of literary patronage, he resolved to share the lodgings of his friend. Arriving in Edinburgh on the 28th of November 1786, he found Richmond occupying a single apartment in Baxter's Close, Lawnmarket, for which he paid three shillings weekly. As he agreed to receive the Poet as room companion, the friends lived together till the following May. When residing at Mossgiel in July 1787, the Poet was concerned to learn that Mr. Richmond's employer had paid the debt of nature, since his removal might injuriously affect his friend's employment and finance. Writing to Richmond on the 7th July, he expresses his desire to be informed as to the state of his affairs, and assures him of his warm friendship. Just a month after the date of his letter—that is, on the 7th of August—Burns returned to Edinburgh. His circumstances had become more prosperous, but he was willing as before to share the humble lodgings of his friend. But Mr. Richmond had got a new companion.

From this period Richmond withdrew from the Poet's friend-

ship, and the cause of his so doing has not been explained. When in his old age he was posed on the subject, he became fretful and impatient; but it was remarked he would not allow a word to be uttered in his presence to the Poet's disadvantage; and he emphatically certified that, when he was his room associate in the Lawnmarket, he kept regular hours, and was habitually sober.^a

After an absence of about four years, Richmond returned to Mauchline, where he established himself as a writer or local attorney. To condone for that social indiscretion which had induced his departure from the place, he made a reparation fitting and honourable. On the 5th August 1791 he married Janet Sojourner, with whom he had formerly associated.¹ Expert in business, and attentive to its concerns, he became prosperous. He died in 1846, in his eighty-first year.² By his wife (who died in 1836, aged seventy-six) he had a daughter, Janet, who married William Alexander, merchant in Mauchline. She died on the 7th August 1868, leaving four sons and three daughters. John, the eldest son, emigrated to America, and there settled in Salt Lake City. James engaged in business in Glasgow, and there died. The two younger sons, Robert and William, have settled in Australia. Janet, the eldest daughter, is a widow. Jean and Margaret are resident in Australia. The elder brother of John Richmond, who succeeded to the lands of East Montgarswood, had a son Henry, who composed a satirical poem, which he printed privately. Henry Richmond married, with issue.

¹ Mauchline Parish Register.

² Tombstone in Mauchline Churchyard.

CAPTAIN ROBERT RIDDEL.

GERVASE DE RIDDEL, a Norman baron who accompanied David I. from England, was by that sovereign constituted Sheriff of Roxburghshire, also receiving lands in the same county. Dying about the year 1140, he left two sons, Walter and Anketil, of whom the former obtained from David I. a charter of the lands of Lilliesleaf and others in the county of Roxburgh, which afterwards became known as the barony of Riddel. Walter was succeeded by his brother, who is described as Sir Anketil de Riddel. This baron had three sons, of whom Walter, the eldest, became his successor. In the barony of Riddel Walter was succeeded by his elder son, Sir Patriek, whose elder son, Sir William, swore fealty to Edward I. in 1296. The representative of Edward's homager, John Riddel of Riddel, was, on the 14th of May 1628, created a baronet by Charles I. He was father of Sir Walter, whose second son, William, an advocate at the Scottish Bar, acquired the lands of Friars Shaw in Teviotdale, and afterwards the estate of Glenriddel. By his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Captain Francis Wauchope of the family of Niddry, he had a son, Walter, who, marrying Catherine, eldest daughter of Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxweltown, had a son, Robert, who succeeded to the lands. Among his descendants was Walter Riddel, who was by Prince Charles Edward taken captive, along with Provost Crosby, as security for the levy laid on Dumfries by his troops during his retreat northwards in December 1745.

Captain Robert Riddel of Glenriddel, a son of Walter, was noted as an antiquary, but is more especially remembered as a friend of the Poet. When Burns entered on the farm of Ellisland, Captain Riddel—whose residence at Friars Carse was situated at a

bend in the Nith, within a mile's distance of the Poet's dwelling—extended to him an early attention. He furnished the Poet with a key to his grounds, which included a decorated cot or hermitage, which he had personally reared. In connexion with this structure, the Poet produced his well-known verses on Friars Carse Hermitage, commencing, “Thou whom chance may hither lead.”

In honour of the anniversary of Captain Riddel's wedding, on the 7th November 1788, the Poet composed these stanzas :—

The day returns, my bosom burns,
 The blissful day we twa did meet,
 Tho' winter wild in tempest toil'd,
 Ne'er summer-sun was half sae sweet.
 Than a' the pride that loads the tide,
 And crosses o'er the sultry line ;
 Than kingly robes, than crowns and globes,
 Heav'n gave me more—it made thee mine !

While day and night can bring delight,
 Or Nature aught of pleasure give ;
 While joys above my mind can move,
 For thee, and thee alone I live.
 When that grim foe of life below
 Comes in between to make us part,
 The iron hand that breaks our band,
 It breaks my bliss—it breaks my heart !

For the use of his friend, the Poet soon afterwards prepared a manuscript book of poems and scraps, which forms the introduction to an abridgment of his first *Commonplace Book*. With this manuscript book of verses, Burns despatched to the laird of Glenriddel the following letter :—

ELLISLAND, 1789.

SIR,—I wish from my inmost soul it were in my power to give you a more substantial gratification and return for all your goodness to the poet, than tran-

scribing a few of his idle rhymes. However, "an old song," though to a proverb an instance of insignificance, is generally the only coin a poet has to pay with.

If my poems, which I have transcribed, and mean still to transcribe, into your Book, were equal to the grateful respect and high esteem I bear for the gentleman to whom I present them, they would be the finest poems in the language. As they are, they will at least be a testimony with what sincerity I have the honor to be, sir, your devoted, humble servant.

The following lines, addressed by the Poet to Captain Riddel on returning a newspaper, seem to belong to the first year of their acquaintance :—

Your News and Review, sir,
I've read through and through, sir,
With little admiring or blaming ;
The Papers are barren
Of home news or foreign,
No murders or rapes worth the naming.

Our friends, the Reviewers,
Those chippers and hewers,
Are judges of mortar and stone, sir ;
But of *meet* or *unmeet*,
In a fabric complete,
I'll boldly pronounce they are none, sir.

My goose-quill too rude is
To tell all your goodness
Bestow'd on your servant, the Poet ;
Would to God I had one
Like a beam of the sun,
And then all the world, sir, should know it !

Consequent on his intimacy with Captain Riddel, Burns composed his ballad of "The Whistle." That ballad commemorates a drinking match which, on the 16th October 1790, took place at Friars Carse between Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxwelltown, Mr. Riddel,

and Mr. Alexander Ferguson of Craigdarroch, for an ebony whistle which, according to tradition, had been brought to Scotland by a Danish gentleman in the train of Anne of Denmark. The terms laid down were that the combatants should drink bottle for bottle of claret with each other until victory declared itself by one of the number only remaining capable of sounding the whistle. On the decision of the umpire, Mr. John M'Murdo of Drumlanrig, Mr. Ferguson was declared the winner. In anticipation of the conflict, Burns addressed Captain Riddel, on the morning of the 16th, a jocose epistle commencing thus:—

Big with the idea of this important day at Friars Carse, I have watched the elements and skies, in the full persuasion that they would announce it to the astonished world by some phenomena of terrific portent. Yesternight until a very late hour did I wait with anxious horror, for the appearance of some Comet firing half the sky, or aerial armies of sanguinary Scandinavians darting athwart the startled heavens, rapid as the ragged lightning, and horrid as those convulsions of nature that bury nations. The elements, however, seem to take the matter very quietly: they did not even usher in this morning with triple suns and a shower of blood, symbolical of the three potent heroes and the mighty claret-shed of the day. For me, as Thomson in his "Winter" says of the storm, I shall "hear astonish'd, and astonish'd sing."

"The whistle and the man I sing;
The man that won the whistle," etc.

While Sir John Sinclair was passing through the press the *Statistical Account of Scotland*, Captain Riddel embraced the opportunity of celebrating the Poet's exertions in the formation of a local library by communicating to Sir John the following letter:—

I enclose you a letter written by Mr. Burns as an addition to the account of Dunscore Parish. It contains an account of a small library which he was so good (at my desire) as to set on foot in the barony of Monkland, or Friars Carse, in this parish. As its utility has been felt, particularly among the

younger class of people, I think that if a similar plan were established in the different parishes of Scotland, it would tend greatly to the speedy improvement of the tenantry, tradespeople, and workpeople. Mr. Burns was so good as to take the whole charge of this small concern. He was treasurer, librarian, and censor to this little society, who will long have a grateful sense of his public spirit and exertions for their improvement and information.

Captain Riddel's letter accompanied one written by the Poet, in the third volume of the *Statistical Account*.

The amicable relations which subsisted between Captain Riddel and the Poet were unhappily disturbed. Early in the year 1794, the Captain's brother, Mr. Walter Riddel, had been entertaining a party of friends at his residence of Woodley Park, when the gentlemen in a frolic invaded the drawing-room like a herd of satyrs, Burns on the occasion seizing Mrs. Riddel and kissing her. The act, strongly resented by the lady, also gave offence to her brother-in-law, Captain Riddel, who ceased to hold communication with the Bard; and it is to be regretted that, though the Poet expressed in the strongest terms his regret for his breach of propriety, Captain Riddel passed away without having an opportunity of indicating his forgiveness. Nevertheless, Burns did not overlook his friend's former kindness, but, immediately subsequent to his death, honoured his memory by the following elegiac stanzas:—

No more, ye warblers of the wood! no more;
 Nor pour your descant grating on my soul;
 Thou young-eyed Spring, gay in thy verdant stole,
 More welcome were to me grim Winter's wildest roar.

How can ye charm, ye flowers, with all your dyes?
 Ye blow upon the sod that wraps my friend!
 How can I to the tuneful strain attend?
 That strain flows round the untimely tomb where Riddel lies.

Yes, pour, ye warblers ! pour the notes of woe ;
 And soothe the Virtues weeping o'er his bier :
 The man of worth—and hath not left his peer !—
 Is in his " narrow house," for ever darkly low.

Thee, Spring ! again with joy shall others greet ;
 Me, memory of my loss will only meet.

Captain Riddel died on the 21st April 1794.

A considerable musician, the laird of Glenriddel composed the airs to several of Burns's songs, including "The Banks of Nith," "The Whistle," "Nithdale's Welcome Home," "The Blue-eyed Lassie," and "The Day returns." He was notable as an antiquary. In "The Whistle" Burns styles him "the trusty Glenriddel, so versed in old coins." He published in the *Archæologia* papers entitled "Account of the Ancient Lordship of Galloway, from the earliest period to the year 1455, when it was annexed to the Crown of Scotland," "Remarks on the Title of Thane and Abthane," "Of the Ancient Modes of Fortification in Scotland," "On Vitrified Fortifications in Galloway," "Account of a Symbol of Ancient Investiture in Scotland," "Account of a Brass Vessel found near Dumfries in Scotland," and "Notices of Fonts in Scotland."

Captain Riddel was husband of Elizabeth ——, an admirable woman,¹ who shared his tastes, and joined him in dispensing an elegant hospitality. "At their fireside," writes Burns, "I have enjoyed more pleasant evenings than at all the houses of fashionable people in this country put together ; and to their kindness and hospitality I am indebted for many of the happiest hours of my life."

¹ The Poet named his daughter, born on the 1st November 1792, Elizabeth Riddel, in honour of the lady of Glenriddel. The child Elizabeth Riddel died young.

MRS. WALTER RIDDEL.

DAUGHTER of William Woodley, Governor and Commander-in-chief of St. Kitts and of the Leeward Islands, Maria Banks Woodley was a native of England. In the West Indies becoming acquainted with Mr. Walter Riddel, a younger brother of Glenriddel, who had acquired an estate in Antigua, she at an early age became his wife. Returning to Great Britain in 1791, Mr. Riddel purchased a handsome mansion, surrounded with a small estate, about four miles to the south of Dumfries. Under the name of "The Holm," the place was the country residence of Andrew Crosbie, the eminent advocate and reputed prototype of Counsellor Pleydell in *Guy Mannering*. Afterwards purchased by a gentleman named Goldie, he called it "Goldielea" after his own name and that of his wife, Leigh, she being a descendant of that notable English family. On acquiring the property from Mr. Goldie, Mr. Riddel changed its name to "Woodley Park," in honour of his wife; but, as the estate reverted to Mr. Goldie on the non-payment of the purchase-money, it regained the appellative of "Goldielea," by which it is at present known.

A wife and mother under twenty, Mrs. Maria Riddel evinced a strong literary aptitude, and, with her husband, cultivated the society of men of talent. Among the favoured visitors at Woodley Park was the Poet, who was personally charmed with Mrs. Riddel's literary tastes as well as her personal beauty. She composed elegant verses, which she unobtrusively submitted to the Poet's revision; while from the stores of her well-selected library the Bard added to his acquaintance with the English classics, also with the best authors of France and Italy.

At an early stage of their acquaintance Mrs. Riddel informed

the Poet of her desire to present to the public some sketches of natural history which she had prepared in the narrative of a voyage to Madeira and the Leeward Islands, and with that view begged him to introduce her to his friend Mr. Smellie. Complying with her wish, the Poet made her known to Mr. Smellie by a letter dated Dumfries, 22nd January 1792. In that letter he wrote thus :—

Mrs. Riddel, who will take this letter to town with her, and send it to you, is a character that, even in your own way, as a naturalist and a philosopher, would be an acquisition to your acquaintance. The lady, too, is a votary of the Muses ; and, as I think myself somewhat of a judge in my own trade, I assure you that her verses, always correct, and often elegant, are much beyond the common run of the *lady poetesses* of the day. She is a great admirer of your book [*The Philosophy of Natural History*] ; and hearing me say that I was acquainted with you, she begged to be known to you, as she is just going to pay her first visit to our Caledonian capital.

The Poet adds :—

In appreciating the lady's merits, she has one unlucky failing—a failing which you will easily discover, as she seems rather pleased with indulging in it ; and a failing that you will easily pardon, as it is a sin which very much besets yourself,—where she dislikes or despises, she is apt to make no more a secret of it than where she esteems and respects.

Mr. Smellie read Mrs. Riddel's manuscript with much interest, as appears in a letter which he addressed to her on the 27th March. He writes :—

When I considered your youth, and still more your sex, the perusal of your ingenious and judicious work, if I had not previously had the pleasure of your conversation, the devil himself could not have frightened me into the belief that a female human creature could, in the bloom of youth, beauty, and consequently of giddiness, have produced a performance so much out of the line of your ladies' works. Smart little poems, flippant romances, are not uncommon ; but

science, minute observation, accurate description, and excellent composition are qualities seldom to be met with in the female world.

From Mr. Smellie's printing-press Mrs. Riddel's work appeared in October under the following title, *Voyages to the Madeira and Leeward Caribee Islands; with Sketches of the Natural History of these Islands.* By Maria R——. The naturalist-printer, visiting Dumfries not long afterwards, was entertained by Mrs. Riddel and her husband at their hospitable residence.

In November 1792, when Mrs. Riddel was about to bespeak a play at the theatre, the Poet addressed her in the following terms:—

I am thinking to send my "Address" to some periodical publication, but it has not got your sanction: so pray look over it.

As to Tuesday's play, let me beg of you, my dear madam—let me beg of you to give us "The Wonder, a Woman keeps a Secret;" to which please add "The Spoilt Child." You will highly oblige me by so doing.

Ah, what an enviable creature you are! There now, this cursed gloomy blue-devil day, you are going to a party of choice spirits

"To play the shapes
Of frolic fancy, and incessant form
Those rapid pictures, that assembled train
Of fleet ideas, never joined before,
Where lively Wit excites to gay surprise;
Or folly-painting Humour, grave himself,
Calls laughter forth, deep shaking every nerve."

But as you rejoice with them that do rejoice, do also remember to weep with them that weep, and pity your melancholy friend,

R. B.

In April 1793 the Poet composed in Mrs. Riddel's honour the song commencing "The last time I came o'er the moor," a composition which has been censured for its more than poetic fervour.

During the same year he addressed Mrs. Riddel in the following epigram :—

“Praise woman still,” his lordship roars,¹
 “Deserv’d or not, no matter !”
 But thee, whom all my soul adores,
 Ev’n flattery cannot flatter :
 MARIA, all my thought and dream,
 Inspires my vocal shell ;
 The more I praise my lovely theme,
 The more the truth I tell.

The anniversary of Mrs. Riddel’s birthday on the 4th November 1793 he celebrated in these lines :—

Old Winter, with his frosty beard,
 Thus once to Jove his prayer preferred :
 “What have I done of all the year,
 To bear this hated doom severe ?
 My cheerless suns no pleasure know ;
 Night’s horrid car drags dreary slow ;
 My dismal months no joys are crowning,
 But spleeny English hanging, drowning.

“Now, Jove, for once be mighty civil,
 To counterbalance all this evil ;
 Give me, and I’ve no more to say,—
 Give me Maria’s natal day :
 That brilliant gift shall so enrich me,
 Spring, Summer, Autumn cannot match me.”
 “’Tis done !” says Jove ; so ends my story,
 And Winter once rejoiced in glory.

¹ These lines were first published in the Library edition of Burns’s Works, vol. iii. 164. The editor remarks that an endorsement on the manuscript explains that some one, in presence of Mrs. Riddel, had informed the Poet

that Lord Buchan in an argument vociferated that women must always be flattered grossly or not praised at all, whereupon Burns pencilled these lines on a slip of paper, which he handed to the lady.

From the spring of 1793 till the beginning of the following year Mr. Walter Riddel was absent in the West Indies. In November Mrs. Riddel thus communicated with Mr. Smellie :—

I am as chaste and domestic, but perhaps not quite so industrious, as Penelope in the absence of her hero. I resemble rather the lilies of the field : “ I toil not, neither do I spin ; ” but I read, I write, I sing, and contrive to wile away the time as pleasantly as any sociable being like myself can do in a state of solitude and in some measure of mortification. . . . I shall write you more fully in my next as to the nature of my present pursuits, and how I found Burns and the other friends here you left behind, for they were not few, I assure you.

Though unable to indulge the society of the Poet during the absence of her husband, Mrs. Riddel felt justified in asking him to accompany her to the theatre at Dumfries. Some time in November 1793 he reciprocated her attention in the following letter :—

DEAR MADAM,—I meant to have called on you yesternight, but as I edged up to your box-door, the first object which greeted my view, was one of those lobster-coated puppies, sitting like another dragon, guarding the Hesperian fruit. On the conditions and capitulations you so obligingly offer, I shall certainly make my weather-beaten rustic phiz a part of your box-furniture on Tuesday ; when we may arrange the business of the visit.

Among the profusion of idle compliments, which insidious craft, or unmeaning folly, incessantly offer at your shrine—a shrine, how far exalted above such adoration—permit me, were it but for rarity’s sake, to pay you the honest tribute of a warm heart and an independent mind ; and to assure you that I am, thou most amiable and most accomplished of thy sex, with the most respectful esteem, and fervent regard, thine, etc.,

R. B.

Early in 1794 Mr. Riddel returned from the West Indies, and proceeded to celebrate his arrival by a symposium at his residence. Encouraged by their host, the guests drank heavily, and as a matter

of frolic invaded the drawing-room like a herd of satyrs. Each laid hold of a lady in a sort of miniature Rape of the Sabines, while the Poet seized and saluted the hostess, a woman "who," as Dr. Robert Chambers writes, "*he* in his ordinary moments regarded as a divinity not to be too rashly approached." Mrs. Riddel was deeply offended, nor did a letter from the Poet, despatched to her immediately afterwards, and conceived in the strongest terms of self-reproach, allay the bitterness of her resentment. Unhappily, the Poet, instead of continuing his expressions of contrition and exhausting every means of reconciliation, was led through wounded pride to pour forth against the lady and her husband a series of lampoons and epigrams. Ere the quarrel had attained its height, we find him addressing Mrs. Riddel in the two following letters:—

DUMFRIES, 1794.

MADAM,—I return your Commonplace Book. I have perused it with much pleasure, and would have continued my criticisms, but as it seems the critic has forfeited your esteem, his strictures must lose their value.

If it is true that "offences come only from the heart," before you I am guiltless. To admire, esteem, and prize you as the most accomplished of women, and the first of friends—if these are crimes, I am the most offending thing alive.

In a face where I used to meet the kind complacency of friendly confidence, *now* to find cold neglect and contemptuous scorn, is a wretch that my heart can ill bear. It is, however, some kind of miserable good-luck, that while *de-haut-en-bas* rigour may depress an unoffending wretch to the ground, it has a tendency to rouse a stubborn something in his bosom, which, though it cannot heal the wounds of his soul, is at least an opiate to blunt their poignancy.

With the profoundest respect for your abilities; the most sincere esteem and ardent regard for your gentle heart and amiable manners; and the most fervent wish and prayer for your welfare, peace, and bliss, I have the honor to be, madam, your most devoted, humble servant,

ROBT. BURNS.

DUMFRIES, 1794.

I have this very moment got the song from Syne, and I am sorry to see that he has spoilt it a good deal. It shall be a lesson to me how I lend him anything again.

I have sent you *Werter*; truly happy to have any, the smallest opportunity of obliging you.

'Tis true, madam, I saw you once since I was at W—— P——; and that once froze the very life-blood of my heart. Your reception of me was such, that a wretch meeting the eye of his Judge, about to pronounce sentence of death on him, could only have envied my feelings and situation. But I hate the theme, and never more shall write or speak of it.

One thing I shall proudly say, that I can pay Mrs. R. a higher tribute of esteem, and appreciate her amiable worth more truly than any man whom I have seen approach her; nor will I yield the *pas* to any man living, in subscribing myself with the sincerest truth, her devoted, humble servant.

R. B.

When the Poet began to relent in his severities towards his former friends, he, as a conciliatory offering, addressed Mrs. Riddel in his lines, beginning, "Young Jamie, pride of a' the plain." And, in the further hope of allaying her resentment, he addressed to her the song beginning, "Canst thou leave me thus, my Katie?" which, it is understood, Mrs. Riddel acknowledged by despatching to the writer the following verses:—

Stay, my Willie, yet believe me;
 Stay, my Willie, yet believe me;
 For, ah! thou know'st na every pang
 Wad wring my bosom should'st thou leave me.

Tell me that thou yet art true,
 And a' my wrongs shall be forgiven;
 And when this heart proves fause to thee,
 Yon sun shall cease its course in heaven.

But to think I was betrayed,
 That falsehood e'er our loves should sunder !
 To take the flow'ret to my breast,
 And find the guilefu' serpent under.

Could I hope thou'dst ne'er deceive,
 Celestial pleasures, might I choose 'em,
 I'd slight, nor seek in other spheres
 That heaven I'd find within thy bosom.

Stay, my Willie, yet believe me ;
 Stay, my Willie, yet believe me ;
 For, ah ! thou know'st na every pang
 Wad wring my bosom should'st thou leave me.

In March 1795 the Poet addressed Mrs. Riddel in the following letter :—

Mr. Burns's compliments to Mrs. Riddel—is much obliged to her for her polite attention in sending him the book. Owing to Mr. B. being at present acting as Supervisor of Excise, a department that occupies his every hour of the day, he has not that time to spare which is necessary for any *belle-lettre* pursuit ; but, as he will in a week or two again return to his wonted leisure, he will then pay that attention to Mrs. R.'s beautiful song, "To thee, lov'd Nith," which it so well deserves.

When *Anacharsis' Travels* come to hand, which Mrs. Riddel mentioned as her gift to the public library, Mr. B. will thank her for a reading of it, previous to her sending it to the library, as it is a book he has never seen, and he wishes to have a longer perusal than the regulations of the library allow.

Friday Eve.

P.S.—Mr. Burns will be much obliged to Mrs. Riddel if she will favor him with a perusal of any of her poetical pieces which he may not have seen.

DUMFRIES, 1795.

The correspondence was now re-established, as appears from various letters addressed to Mrs. Riddel, and included in the Poet's

works, but it is to be remarked that the Bard commences his several communications with "Madam," instead of the "Dear Madam" and "My Dear Madam" of former times. In a letter to Mrs. Riddel, dated the 29th of January 1796, the Poet remarks: "The health you wished me in your morning's card is, I think, thrown from me for ever. I have not been able to leave my bed to-day till an hour ago." . . .

The Poet's last letter to Mrs. Riddel is dated the 4th of June 1796; it proceeds thus:—

I am in such miserable health as to be incapable of showing my loyalty in any way. Racked as I am with rheumatisms, I meet every face with a greeting like that of Balak to Balaam. "Come, curse me Jacob; and come, defy me Israel!" so say I: Come, curse me that east wind; and come, defy me the north! Would you have me in such circumstances copy you out a love-song?

I may perhaps see you on Saturday, but I will not be at the ball. Why should I? "Man delights not me, nor woman either!" Can you supply me with the song, "Let us all be unhappy together?" Do, if you can, and oblige
le pauvre misérable. R. B.

When, in July, Mrs. Riddel, on a visit to Brow, learned that the Poet had arrived there in a feeble condition, she invited him to dinner, and sent her carriage to convey him to her house. In reference to the occasion Mrs. Riddel afterwards wrote thus:—

I was struck with his appearance on entering the room. The stamp of death was imprinted on his features. He seemed already touching the brink of eternity. His first salutation was: "Well, madam, have you any commands for the other world?" I replied, that it seemed a doubtful case which of us should be there soonest, and that I hoped he would yet live to write my epitaph. He looked in my face with an air of great kindness, and expressed his concern at seeing me look so ill, with his accustomed sensibility. At table, he ate little or nothing, and he complained of having entirely lost the tone of his stomach. We had a long and serious conversation about his present situation, and the approaching termination of all his earthly prospects. He spoke of his death

without any of the ostentation of philosophy, but with firmness, as well as feeling, as an event likely to happen very soon, and which gave him concern chiefly from leaving his four children so young and unprotected, and his wife in so interesting a situation—in hourly expectation of lying in of a fifth. He mentioned, with seeming pride and satisfaction, the promising genius of his eldest son, and the flattering marks of approbation he had received from his teachers, and dwelt particularly on his hopes of that boy's future conduct and merit. His anxiety for his family seemed to hang heavy upon him, and the more perhaps from the reflection, that he had not done them all the justice he was so well qualified to do. Passing from this subject, he showed great concern about the care of his literary fame, and particularly the publication of his posthumous works. He said he was well aware that his death would occasion some noise, and that every scrap of his writing would be revived against him to the injury of his future reputation: that letters and verses written with unguarded and improper freedom, and which he earnestly wished to have buried in oblivion, would be handed about by idle vanity or malevolence, when no dread of his resentment would restrain them, or prevent the censures of shrill-tongued malice, or the insidious sarcasms of envy, from pouring forth all their venom to blast his fame.

He lamented that he had written many epigrams on persons against whom he entertained no enmity, and whose characters he should be sorry to wound; and many indifferent poetical pieces, which he feared would now, with all their imperfections on their head, be thrust upon the world. On this account, he deeply regretted having deferred to put his papers in a state of arrangement, as he was now quite incapable of the exertion.

The conversation was kept up with great evenness and animation on his side. I had seldom seen his mind greater or more collected. There was frequently a considerable degree of vivacity in his sallies, and they would probably have had a greater share, had not the concern and dejection I could not disguise, damped the spirit of pleasantry he seemed not unwilling to indulge.

We parted about sunset on the evening of that day (the 5th July 1796); the next day I saw him again, and we parted to meet no more!

Mrs. Riddel's admirable and elegantly composed sketch of the Poet, dated 7th August 1796, we have noticed elsewhere; it is alike creditable to her native goodness and her literary skill. In reference

to her friend's genius, she strongly affirms "that poetry was actually not his *forte*; and that certainly none ever outshone him in the charms—the sorcery . . . of fascinating conversation."

On the death of his brother Robert, in 1794, Mr. Walter Riddel succeeded to the estate of Glenriddel, but not long afterwards he was under the necessity of relinquishing both Friars Carse and Woodley Park. He died about the close of the century, when Mrs. Riddel, with a son and daughter, removed to England. For a time she resided in apartments at Hampton Court, where died, in 1804, her only son, Alexander. Her daughter, Anna Maria, married Mr. — Walker, whose son, Mr. Arthur de Noe Walker, now practises as a physician in London.

Mrs. Riddel married, secondly, in 1807, Phillipps Lloyd Fletcher, a gentleman of property in Wales, but she survived the union only eight months. Her remains were deposited in her husband's family vault at Chester.

Besides her volume on Madeira and the Leeward Islands, Mrs. Riddel contributed sixteen compositions in verse to a work issued at London in 1803, entitled *The Metrical Miscellany*, consisting chiefly of poems, hitherto unpublished. This work has become extremely rare, but a copy is to be found in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

HUGH ROGER.

IN the parish churchyard of Kirkoswald a plain tombstone commemorates John Roger, who died on the 23rd of January 1749, aged eighty, also his wife, Mary Bodan, who died on the 3rd March 1736, at the age of fifty. The spouses so commemorated rented the

farm of Thomaston Mill in Kirkoswald parish. They had several children, one of whom, Hugh, was baptized on the 2nd January 1726.¹

Early inclined to the acquisition of knowledge, Hugh Roger was his own instructor ; he formed his letters and afterwards his figures on the sea-beach, which adjoined his father's farm. One day, as he was so improving himself, a gentleman who was passing remarked his industry, and encouraged him to persevere, a stimulus which, as he afterwards related, materially fortified his energy. When in his early manhood a vacancy occurred in the office of parish schoolmaster, he was preferred to the appointment ; and he afterwards added to his scanty revenues by acting as a land-surveyor, and giving private instruction in the higher mathematics. Latterly he attained distinction as an instructor, and consequently the sons of persons of rank were boarded in his family. Among those of his pupils who attained eminence were the Poet, Sir Gilbert Blane, Bart., the distinguished physician, and Sir Andrew Cathcart, Bart., of Carleton. During his early incumbency, Mr. Roger lacked official premises, the school being a small apartment, leased by the heritors for one guinea of annual rent, while the schoolmaster accommodated himself in a cottage of two apartments, with small attics. In the "ben" house, or parlour of the latter, Burns was instructed in mensuration and geometry during the summer of 1776.

In the management of his boarding establishment Mr. Roger derived important assistance from his wife, a woman of superior intelligence. By name Helen M'William, her father rented the farm of Shennas, in the parish of Ballantrae. Thrown by his early death into a condition of dependence, she acted as a domestic servant, first in the manse of Kirkoswald, and subsequently in the family of Craufurd at Ardmillan House. She became known to her

¹ Kirkoswald Parish Register.

future husband when serving in the manse, but she was won not without difficulty, and after a correspondence considerably protracted. Her suitor's letters have been preserved, and are of curious interest, inasmuch as, while the handwriting is graceful and exact, the orthography is extremely defective. After the day of union had been fixed, Hugh, writing to his *fiancée* on the 7th of May 1757, advises that the marriage should be conducted privately, since, "as she was senseable enough" to know, "the preperation" of a public wedding would be attended with an inconvenient outlay, as both of them were "depraved of parents," and provisions were "extreemly dear." To her lover's suggestion Helen cordially assented; but while the wedding was on the 21st of July solemnized privately at Ardmillan House, the laird and his sister, Miss Craufurd, served as man and maid to the bridegroom and bride.

Of the marriage of Hugh Roger and Helen M'William were born nine children, six of whom died in childhood. The survivors were Thomas, Matthew, and Jean.

Thomas, born in June 1758, studied medicine, and was appointed physician on board the *Sibyl*, a ship in the Royal Navy. He died at sea on the 12th November 1782, at the age of twenty-four.¹

Matthew, born 19th November 1767, became factor to the first Marquis of Ailsa; he died 2nd August 1834, at the age of sixty-seven.²

Jean, born 2nd March 1763, married, 29th July 1790,³ John Niven, lessee of Ballochneil farm, Kirkoswald; she died on the 17th January 1847, leaving issue.

Hugh Roger died in May 1797, aged seventy-one; his wife, Helen M'William, on the 24th January 1822, at the age of ninety-five.⁴

¹ Tombstone in Kirkoswald Churchyard.

² *Ibid.*

³ Kirkoswald Parish Register.

⁴ Tombstone in Kirkoswald Churchyard.

REV. JOHN RUSSELL.

JOHN RUSSELL was born in Morayshire in the year 1740. With a view to the ministry he prosecuted theological studies, and on the 21st June 1768 was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Chanonry. Meanwhile he adopted a course which, at this period, was common to ministerial expectants, by engaging in the work of public teaching. Enjoying a high reputation as a classical and general scholar, he was preferred to the office of schoolmaster of the town and parish of Cromarty, a post attended with considerable emolument. In connexion with his scholastic labours at Cromarty we have derived some interesting particulars from the MS. of a work, entitled *Memorabilia Domestica*, 1694–1819, composed by the Rev. Donald Sage, minister of Resolis, and lately published in an abridged form. Mr. Sage writes :—

My father, Alexander Sage, afterwards minister of Kildonan, born at Lochcarron in 1753, was, after acquiring the rudiments of knowledge under the paternal roof, sent to the school of Cromarty. The teacher, Mr. John Russell, was a man of great worth, and an expert scholar. The gentry, the clergy, and the upper class of tenants in the shires of Ross, Cromarty, and Inverness sent their sons to his school. His method of teaching had not perhaps the polished surface of those systems which are most approved of now, but it was minute, careful, and substantial. In the elementary rules his pupils received training they could never afterwards forget. My father could at the age of seventy repeat the construction rules of Ruddiman's Rudiments, and the rules of Watt's Grammar, with all the accuracy and promptness with which he had expressed them with the fear of Mr. John Russell before his eyes. When Mr. Russell's pupils began to read Latin, they were taught to speak the language also. In the more advanced classes, not a word in the school dared any one to address to the teacher or to each other but in Latin, and thus they were made familiar with the language. Mr. Russell was a most uncompromising disciplinarian. The dread of his discipline was felt, and its salutary exercise extended not only

within the four corners of the schoolroom, but over the length and breadth of the parish. The trifter within the school on week days, the sauntering thoughtless loungee on the streets or on the links of Cromarty on the Sabbath days, had that instinctive terror of Mr. Russell that the beasts are said to have of the lion. The truant quailing under his glance betook himself to his lesson, the saunterer on the links, at the first blink of him on the braehead, returned home. In connection with this pre-emptoriness Mr. Russell was a man of vital piety.¹

By Dr. Hew Scott, in his *Fasti*, Mr. Russell is described as having, prior to his becoming parish schoolmaster of Cromarty, been employed as tutor in the family of Mr. Charles Grant, afterwards of the East India Company.² On this statement Mr. Sage reflects important light,—since he intimates that Charles Grant was Mr. Russell's pupil at Cromarty school. According to Mr. Sage, Grant was shopkeeper to William Forsyth, a grocer in Cromarty, and was, consequent on his desire for knowledge, allowed by his employer to attend Mr. Russell's school. The knowledge which Mr. Grant so received largely availed him, for, having in 1767 proceeded to India in some humble capacity, he rose step by step, until in 1794 he was elected a Director of the East India Company. Subsequently he was appointed chairman of the Court of Directors; he also became Parliamentary representative of the county of Inverness. Mr. Grant was noted for his vital piety, and for the zeal with which he sought to advance the cause of Christianity in the East. His son, Sir Robert Grant, who inherited his ability, was also imbued with a becoming sense of religion; he is the well-known author of the three exquisite hymns beginning, "When gathering clouds around I view," "O worship the King, all glorious above," and "O Saviour, whose mercy severe in its kindness." And it is not unreasonable to conclude that the grocer's assistant of Cromarty may, while acquiring at Mr. Russell's school the elements of secular learning, have also

¹ *Memorabilia Domestica*, MS., vol. i. p. 76.

² *Fasti Eccl. Scot.* ii. 177.

imbibed a portion of his religious fervour, and the rudiments of that piety which shone in his own life, and was reflected upon his son.

In his *Memorabilia* Mr. Sage describes Mr. Russell as "a preacher of great power," and it was doubtless on account of his reputation as an expounder of divine truth that, on a vacancy occurring in the New or High Church of Kilmarnock, consequent on the translation of Mr. James Oliphant, its first minister, to another parish, he was by the voice of the people called to that charge. He was ordained to the office on the 30th March 1774, at the mature age of thirty-four.

With his deep religious sense and doctrinal earnestness, Mr. Russell must at Kilmarnock have at once been involved in strange antipathies. In his northern home he had encountered much practical infidelity, much levity and Sabbath-breaking. But there was no prevailing heterodoxy—the clergy, whether energetic or indolent, gave forth in their teaching no uncertain sound. Exceptions there certainly were, but these were so rare as to justify the observation that the rule was on the other side. In northern pulpits was preached a sound evangelism; in western Scotland in 1774, and some time subsequently, there prevailed among the clergy a blighting secularity.

Ayrshire has indeed, more than any other Scottish province, been the arena of religious heavings. Ere had been formulated against the doctrinal errors of the Romish Church any special system, the Lollards of Kyle, in the fifteenth century, contended for a pure faith. Some of the earlier and more prominent lay converts to Protestant doctrine in Scotland were Ayrshire noblemen, such as the Earls of Glencairn and Cassilis, together with such land-owners as Campbell of Kinzeanleuch, Lockhart of Barr, and Wallace of Cairnhill. And when George Wishart, the future martyr, was

prosecuting his labours as an evangelist, he found in Ayrshire a prevailing desire to receive and profit by his doctrinal teaching. And the religious earnestness which in Ayrshire arose with the Lollards, and was renewed at the Reformation, continued up to the close of the seventeenth century to distinguish the province as the scene of an enlightened faith. During the Covenanting struggles of the seventeenth century, Ayrshire was remarkable for the number of its confessors, the religious history of the age being largely bound up with the annals of its martyrs. Nor in Ayrshire had in the eighteenth century the religious heavings of a former period wholly ceased. The practice which had arisen during the Stuart persecution, of quitting the episcopally served churches, and of flocking to the tents of deprived Presbyterian preachers, developed subsequent to the Revolution into the habit of frequenting the communion services in convenient centres. And in Ayrshire, to a greater extent than in any other county, did sacramental tent preaching prevail at the time when Mr. Russell entered at Kilmarnock on the ministerial office. But the bulk of the clergy, while necessarily conforming to the popular demand for lengthened communion services, had adopted views wholly antagonistic to the fervent faith of previous times. They preached the doctrines of Socinus. Denying the existence of original sin—that is, ignoring the Temptation and its effects—and holding the devil as a myth, they could propose no remedy to a degraded humanity other than the cold doctrine of an impossible self-sacrifice. In their creed no place was found for the atonement. They accepted Christ as a Saviour only in reference to His example, and the self-denying character of His life. And this system they set forth as *the New Light*, in contradistinction to that Old Light embodied in the Church's standards and "Confession."

Strongly opposing the New Light or Rationalistic system, Mr. Russell upheld the evangelical teaching of the old times with an

apostolic earnestness. With indignation contemplating the progress of a system of teaching which was sapping the foundations of scriptural truth, he stood forth as the champion of that faith on which the Scottish Church had been reared at the Reformation. He spoke loudly, and wherever he was privileged to preach, whether in the pulpit, in the tent, or on the hillside, his voice rang forth the precious doctrine of salvation through grace.

At Kilmarnock Mr. Russell had for about ten years been noted as an earnest and vigorous upholder of "the Auld Light," when Burns, at the age of twenty-five, came upon the field. Burns had at Irvine three years previously become a member of the Church, and under deep convictions had composed his "Prayer in the Prospect of Death," while his "Cotter's Saturday Night" belongs to 1785, the same year in which Mr. Russell first appears in his verses.

In his doctrinal views Burns was wholly opposed to Mr. Russell. Like one in intellectual power akin to him,—we mean Thomas Carlyle,—he abhorred pretentiousness, while also, Carlyle-like, he was prone to suspect cant, where existed the truth only. He also accepted the teaching of the New Light school, inasmuch as, while not liable to any charge of fanaticism, the professors evinced an easy secularity. There was a further consideration: the poet's father, William Burnes, a most pious and exemplary man, had composed for the use of his sons a manual of religious belief, in which, while he sought to soften the rigidity of Calvinistic doctrine, he unconsciously gave a measure of sanction to New Light doctrine. Thus actuated, the Poet came to believe that those who adhered to the doctrines of the Scottish Confession were retarding the progress of thought, and clothing in a dark repellent garb the religion of love.

Burns therefore assailed the Old Light doctrine, and against its more zealous upholders cast from his sarcastic bow the keenest arrows. Conspicuous as he was, Mr. Russell might not escape. In

His piercin' words, like Highlan' swords,
 Divide the joints and marrow ;
 His talk o' hell, whare devils dwell,
 Our vera "sauls does harrow"
 Wi' fright that day.

The Poet's ballad of "The Kirk of Scotland's Alarm," in which Mr. Russell is next introduced, belongs to 1789, when its author had become famous. This ballad has reference to an inquiry as to the soundness of a discourse on the death of Christ, published by Dr. William M'Gill, one of the ministers of Ayr, the doctrine of which Mr. Russell had gravely impugned. Alluding to Mr. Russell the Poet writes :—

Rumble John! Rumble John,
 Mount the steps with a groan,
 Cry "The book is with heresy cramm'd ;"
 Then out wi' your ladle,
 Deal brimstone like aidle,
 And roar ev'ry note of the damn'd,
 Rumble John!
 And roar ev'ry note of the damn'd.

Here there is irreverent invective, but which fails to strike the subject of it, inasmuch as the preacher was offensive to the Poet, not on account of any doctrinal defection, but because of his strong adherence to his principles. In his mode of expounding divine truth—in his manner of holding up the Old Light standard, Mr. Russell used words plain and forcible. Strict in maintaining order in the schoolroom, he was rigid in upholding orthodoxy in the Church. And it was well, since the secularizing clergy were obscuring the light of former times, and were inducing their hearers to walk with them under a dark shadow. If, therefore, the faithful minister of the New Church raised the voice of alarm, he did so under circumstances when mild words would have been unprofitable and gentleness ineffective.

Burns assailed Mr. Russell as the powerful and popular leader of a party which had resisted Arminian tenets and repelled Socinian error.¹ In this connexion the Poet's censure was the preacher's praise—the greatest poetical genius of his country unconsciously celebrating one who upheld those principles of which the general recognition had rendered possible that freedom of sentiment which characterized the Poet's Muse.

In describing the minister of the New Church as preaching terror, Burns sought to depict the mode of the evangelical school in strong contrast with the moderate phraseology of the New Light teachers, who avoided every expression which might disturb the conscience. Fortunately for his fame, the precise character of Mr. Russell's doctrine does not rest upon any poetical interpretation of it, or even upon tradition. He issued in 1796 a sermon on the text, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," which, preached to the Missionary Society of Kilmarnock, was printed at their request. In this discourse the preacher argues that holiness will grow from no other root than that of a cordial acceptance of the gospel offer; hence he urges that the main object of every preacher should be to lead men to contemplate the love of God in Christ. But we have ampler material wherewith to guide our judgment. When, in 1826, Dr. Chalmers was engaged in preparing for publication the posthumous discourses of Mr. Russell's son, the minister of Muthill, he selected four sermons, preached by Mr. Russell, to be printed along with them. And these sermons are absolutely untainted with spiritual menace, the preacher earnestly expatiating on the extent and depth of the divine mercy.

According to the author of the *Memorabilia*, Mr. Russell indulged

¹ Concerning the Poet's political and religious opinions in 1787, Mr. Ramsay of Ochtertye writes in his Journal: "That poor man's principles were abundantly motley, he being a

Jacobite, an Arminian, and a Socinian."—Ramsay's *Scotland and Scotemen*, Edin. 1888, 2 vols., Svo, vol. ii. p. 554.

a hearty jocundity, which, even on graver themes, he could with difficulty restrain. Opposed to formality in devotion, he held that prayer should consist of the simple utterances of the heart. In reference to this subject, Mr. Sage relates an anecdote of him, which we shall present in his own words :—

When Mr. John Cameron, afterwards minister of Halkirk, in Caithness, was on his trials for licence before the Presbytery of Chanoury in 1766, he was by Mr. Russell accompanied on his journey to the Presbytery seat. Mr. Cameron chanced to inform Mr. Russell that in connexion with the three trial discourses he was to deliver to the Presbytery, he had composed three several prayers to be expressed along with them. These prayers, he said, had cost him much labour, and he had carefully committed them to memory, that they might be given fresh to the Presbytery. As their journey was a long one, the fellow-travellers had by the way to rest for a night at a country inn. On their arrival, Mr. Russell proposed family worship. To this proposition his companion assented, but was surprised to find that, on the plea that he was about to obtain licence as a preacher, Mr. Russell imposed upon him the duty of conducting the service. In praying he gave *verbatim* one of the exercises intended for the Presbytery. Supper concluded, the friends were shown to a bedroom, which they were to occupy together. As Mr. Cameron was hastening to a corner of the room to his private devotions, Mr. Russell prevented him. "My friend," he said, "it is more becoming that we should pray together; and as you are to be engaged to-morrow in prayer and preaching, you cannot better prepare yourself than by being frequently engaged in the exercise." Mr. Cameron felt that a slap had already been made in his stock of prayers, and to the new proposal he strongly objected. But it would not do. Mr. Russell was peremptory. Again upon his knees, the second of his elaborated prayers was offered. In the morning, after they got up, Mr. Russell remarked, "We are about to resume our journey, and it is well we should pray together; let us kneel, and you'll proceed. The exercise will better prepare you for the other duties which are before you." Mr. Cameron again resisted, but again was forced to yield; he gave the third of his prepared exercises, and so exhausted his stock. "Your next prayer will be from the heart," said Mr. Russell. His companion profited by the experience.¹

While lay patronage shed its baneful influence in the rural

¹ *Memorabilia Domestica*, M.S., vol. i. pp. 81, 82.

parishes, the ministers of cities and burghs were usually chosen by the people. By the kirk-session and delegates of the West Church, or second charge of Stirling, Mr. Russell was elected as their minister on the 22nd October 1799, and was admitted to the office on the 30th of the following January. At Stirling he ministered for seventeen years, enjoying the respect and confidence of his people. He died at Stirling on the 23rd of February 1817, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, and the forty-third of his ministry.

Conjointly with the Rev. James Robertson of Kilmarnock, Mr. Russell issued from Mr. Wilson's press at Kilmarnock *Sermons on Sacramental Occasions*, by Mr. James Fraser of Pitcalzian, minister of Alness. This reverend gentleman, who died in 1769, was a correspondent of Wodrow. A work from his pen on *The Scripture Doctrine of Sanctification*, issued posthumously, became celebrated. In the preface to his volume of discourses, Mr. Russell remarks that "he had the honour to be personally acquainted with the author," and that he considered "the acquaintance as one of the happiest circumstances" of his life.

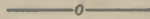
Mr. Russell married Catherine Cunningham, who, inheriting from her mother an ardent piety, became a zealous coadjutor of her husband in the exercise of Christian beneficence; she died at Muthill on the 5th November 1819, at the age of seventy-four. Of the union were born two sons and one daughter. Alexander, the elder son, went to London in his sixteenth year to occupy an appointment in the India House; he died soon afterwards. John, the second son, born in 1784, was a distinguished student of the University of Glasgow, and, after being some time employed as a private tutor, was licensed to preach in 1807 by the Presbytery of Selkirk. Ordained, on the 26th September 1809, minister of Muthill, he was afterwards called to the parish of St. John's in the city of Glasgow, and this latter event so moved him as to

seriously affect his health. After a period of illness, he died at Muthill on the 17th April 1826, at the age of forty-two. A volume of his sermons was published posthumously under the editorial care of Dr. Chalmers, who prefixed a biographical introduction. He married, 14th November 1810, Jean Aitken of Greenock (she died 30th July 1827), and had issue three sons and one daughter. John, the eldest son, joined the Baptist Church; he died early, leaving a widow. James, the second son, died at the age of twenty, while studying for the Congregational Church. Alexander, third and youngest son, joined the Church of England, and, having emigrated to Australia, became incumbent of St. Paul's Church, Adelaide, also dean of his diocese. During the summer of 1886, while the annual festival of his congregation was being held in the Town Hall, he accidentally stumbled on the staircase, and was injured so seriously that he almost immediately expired. Remarkable for his forcible expositions of divine truth, Dean Russell was a cultivator of general literature and a considerable poet. He published a volume of sacred verse entitled, *The Seeker*. He left a widow and six children.

Catherine, only daughter of the minister of Muthill, was received into the Baptist Church; she died unmarried.

Mary, only daughter of the Rev. John Russell and Catherine Cunningham, married, 19th December 1804, the Rev. William Sheriff, minister of St. Ninians, who, having adopted the principles of those who uphold adult baptism, demitted his charge in 1823, and thereafter ministered to a Baptist congregation in Glasgow. Mrs. Sheriff died 5th December 1860. Of the marriage were born two sons and two daughters. William, the eldest son, a physician, died in India; he married, with issue. John, the second son, practised as a solicitor in Glasgow. Catherine, the elder daughter, married — MacEwen, with issue. Mary, the younger daughter, resides at Rockvale, Rothesay, and is unmarried.

A tombstone in Stirling Churchyard, commemorating the Rev. John Russell and his wife, Catherine Cunningham, was in the year 1886 restored by public subscription.



THOMAS SAMSON.

THE subject of "Tam Samson's Elegy" was Thomas Samson, market gardener in Kilmarnock. With Samson the Poet had frequent social meetings in the "Bowling Green House in Back Street, Kilmarnock," the landlord of which was Alexander Patrick, Samson's son-in-law. The "Elegy" appeared in the first Edinburgh edition, prefaced by the motto from Pope, "An honest man's the noblest work of God." In explanation of the elegy being composed on his friend while he was still living, the Poet adds to the composition the following note:—"When this worthy old sportsman went out last muirfowl season, he supposed it was to be, in Ossian's phrase, 'the last of the fields,' and expressed an ardent wish to die and be buried in the muirs. On this hint the author composed his elegy and epitaph." Mr. Samson survived till 1795. His remains were interred in Kilmarnock Laigh Churchyard, at the west end of the church, and there on a plain slab he is thus commemorated:—

THOMAS SAMSON

died the 12th December 1795, aged 72 years.

Tam Samson's weel-worn clay here lies;
 Ye canting zealots, spare him!
 If honest worth in heaven rise,
 Ye'll mend or ye win near him.—BURNS.

DAVID SILLAR.

THE family of Sillar, or Sellars, are found in the parish of Tarbolton, as tenant-farmers, early in the eighteenth century.

Patrick Sillar, farmer at Spittleside, in Tarbolton parish, had four sons—Robert, John, David, and William. Of these, David, the third son, forms the subject of the present sketch. He was born at Spittleside in the year 1760, and, having been educated at the parish school, was for a number of years employed in ordinary work about his father's farm. To his early occupation he, in addressing his supposed critics, thus refers in his printed volume :—

Then know, when I these pieces made,
 Was toiling for my daily bread :
 A scanty learning I enjoyed,
 Sae judge how I hae it employ'd.
 I ne'er depended for my knowledge
 On school, academy, nor college.
 I gat my learnin' at the flail,
 An' some I catch'd at the plough-tail.
 Among the brutes I own I'm bred,
 Since herding was my native trade.

According to the author of *The Contemporaries of Burns*,¹ David Sillar became known to Burns in the year 1780, or early in 1781, when the latter was assisting his father on the lands of Lochlea, which are situated within two miles of Spittleside farm. In relation to the origin of their friendship, Mr. Sillar has made the following record :—

Robert Burns was some time in the parish of Tarbolton prior to my acquaintance with him. His social disposition easily procured him acquaint-

¹ *Contemporaries of Burns* [by James Paterson], Edinburgh, 1840, 8vo, pp. 39, 40.

ance ; but a certain satirical seasoning with which he and all poetical geniuses are in some degrees influenced, while it set the rustic circle in a roar, was not unaccompanied with suspicious fear. I recollect hearing his neighbours observe he had a great deal to say for himself, and that they suspected his principles. He wore the only tied hair in the parish ; and in the church, his plaid, which was of a particular colour (I think fillemot), he wrapped in a peculiar manner round his shoulders. These surmises and his exterior made me solicitous of his acquaintance. I was introduced by Gilbert, not only to his brother but to the whole of that family, where in a short time I became a frequent, and, I believe, not unwelcome visitant. After the commencement of my acquaintance with the Bard, we frequently met upon Sundays, at church, when, between sermons, instead of going with our friends or lasses to the inn, we often took a walk in the fields.

Burns's "Epistle to Davie, a brother Poet," intended for David Sillar, which appeared in his Kilmarnock edition, was, according to the recollection of Gilbert Burns, composed in the summer of 1784, but there is internal evidence that it was not completed till the following year, since, in the eighth stanza, the Bard refers to his "darling Jean," and his acquaintance with Jean Armour did not commence before April 1785.

Abandoning agricultural pursuits, David Sillar, by a course of private study, qualified himself to become interim teacher in the parish school, and, on the office becoming vacant, he offered himself as a candidate. Another applicant being preferred, he opened an adventure school at Commonside, near the village of Tarbolton, but, owing to lack of encouragement, he retired from the concern. Towards the close of 1783 he removed to Irvine, where, in a small shop under the Tolbooth, he traded as a grocer.

In the fields, as a cowherd, Sillar had composed verses, and the success which had attended Burns in his Kilmarnock volume induced him to renew his poetical efforts. Distributing among his friends proposals for publishing a volume of poems, he succeeded in

obtaining a large number of subscribers. In a letter from Ellisland, written on the 5th August 1789, Burns informs him that he had procured him eleven subscribers ; while he rallies him on his having communicated with him in connexion with his proposed book too much in the strain of business, considering their former friendship.¹

Mr. Sillar's volume appeared in 1789. Issued at Kilmarnock from the same press which had in 1786 produced Burns's first edition, it formed an octavo of 247 pages. Dedicating his performance to Hugh Montgomery, Esq., of Skelmorlie, afterwards Earl of Eglinton, the author addressed the public in the following preface :—

Mankind in general, but particularly those who have had the advantage of a liberal education, may deem it presumption in the author, who has been denied that privilege, to attempt either instruction or amusement. But however necessary a learned education may be in Divinity, Philosophy, or the Sciences, it is a fact that some of the best Poetical Performances amongst us have been composed by illiterate men. Natural genius alone is sufficient to constitute a poet : for the imperfections in the works of many poetical writers, which are ascribed to want of education, may, he believes, with more justice be ascribed to want of genius. He leaves every person to judge of his by his writings. The following pieces were composed just as the objects they treat of struck his imagination ; and, if they give others the same pleasure in reading which they gave him in composing, he will have the satisfaction of obtaining his principal end in publishing.

The design of the author in his publication is by no means to offend, but to instruct and amuse ; and although some, with greater judgment and sagacity, might have steered a more prudent course for themselves, yet he is conscious, however he may be treated, of having kept clear of personal reflections. The approbation of the judicious, though few, will always support him under the censure of the superstitious and prejudiced, and inspire him with a proper disregard for popular applause.

¹ Library edition of Burns's Works, v. 251, 252.

For the liberal encouragement his respectable and numerous subscribers has given him, the author returns his sincere thanks :

For back'd by them, his foes, thro' spite
 May grin their fill, but daurna bite.

In his volume Sillar includes the "Second Epistle to Davie, a brother Poet," which Burns had addressed to him, beginning, "I'm three times doubly o'er your debtor." His own compositions lack force, and are unhappily defaced by an occasional grossness. Closely imitating Burns in his rhymes and modes, he nevertheless opposes his friend by denouncing strong drink. He writes :—

Poets, wi' muckle wit and skill,
 Hae sung the virtues o' Scots yill ;
 And wi' the worth o' Highlan' gill
 Our ears hae rung ;
 The bad effects o' whisky still
 Remain unsung.

The whisky trade—deil cares wha had it :
 My curse on him at first wha made it ;
 May't doubly light on those wha spread it,
 An' drinkin' cherish ;
 Lord, toom their pouch, an' clip their credit,
 For fear we perish.

In his second epistle to Mr. Sillar, Burns has these lines :—

Hale be your heart, hale be your fiddle ;
 Long may your elbuck jink and diddle ;

the Poet so alluding to his friend's skill as a musician. And his acquaintance with the musical art considerably exceeded that of an expert performer on the violin, since he is known as composer of the air of Burns's song beginning, "A rosebud by my early walk."

According to the author of *The Contemporaries of Burns*, Sillar, in preparing his volume for the press, became remiss in his attention to business, with the result that he was involved in bankruptcy,

Having been thrown into prison by a creditor to whom he owed five pounds, he appealed for assistance to one of his brothers, who, disapproving of his literary aspirations, refused to be a party to his enlargement. Having otherwise overcome his difficulty, he visited Edinburgh, in the hope of procuring literary employment. Unsuccessful in his new pursuit, he returned to Irvine, where he opened a school, chiefly for the instruction of young seamen in the science of navigation. This enterprise prospered, so that the teacher ere long secured a stated revenue of nearly one hundred pounds. Mr. Sillar afterwards attained large prosperity. By the death of William, his youngest brother, who rented the farm of Spittleside, he succeeded to the lease, also to a considerable portion of substance. Thereafter he obtained the sum of £12,000, on the death of his second brother, John, a Liverpool merchant trading with Africa. And he derived a further addition to his fortune on the death in 1811 of his eldest brother, Robert, who had also prospered as a merchant in Liverpool. Singularly enough, Mr. Sillar, while in the receipt of an income which must have vastly exceeded his most sanguine hopes, continued to exercise his function as a teacher of navigation till feeble health necessitated his retirement. Intensely parsimonious, he refused to contribute towards the Poet's monument on the banks of the Doon; but he loved to discourse on his intercourse with the Bard, and to celebrate each anniversary of his birth.

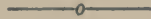
At Irvine Mr. Sillar took some interest in municipal affairs, serving as a councillor of the burgh, also in the magistracy. He died at Irvine on the 2nd May 1830, at the age of seventy. He married,¹ first, Margaret Gemmell, widow of — Kerr; secondly,

¹ David Sillar was, at the time when Burns addressed him poetically, in 1785, a suitor for the hand of Margaret Orr, a servant of Mrs. Stewart at Stair House, hence the Poet's line:—

Ye hae your Meg, your dearest part.

Margaret Orr preferred another admirer, Mr. John Paton, a master shoemaker, whom she married. She died in 1837.

— Bryan. By his first wife he had several children, of whom were—Patrick, a midshipman, who died at Surinam; and Zachary, M.D., who practised as a physician in Liverpool.



WILLIAM SIMSON.

JOHN SIMSON, farmer in Ten-Pound Land in the parish of Ochiltree, and his wife Margaret Paterson, had two sons, William and Patrick. William, the elder son, was baptized at Ochiltree on the 23rd August 1758.¹ By his father intended for the Church, he was pursuing his theological studies at the University of Glasgow, when in the autumn of 1780 the parish school of Ochiltree became vacant. Becoming a candidate for the office, he was elected, and thereafter he devoted himself exclusively to educational pursuits.

When, in the spring of 1785, the Poet composed his "Twa Herds," he gave a copy to a friend, without acknowledging himself as the writer. But, as copies multiplied, and the verses were by a number of persons received with applause, the authorship became known. At this time Patrick Simson procured in Kilmarnock a copy of the poem, which he carried to Ochiltree for the amusement of his brother William, he being alike an admirer of poetry and a writer of verses. Treasuring his acquisition, the versifier at Ochiltree transmitted to his brother rhymer at Mossgiel a poetical epistle expressing his cordial appreciation. Mr. Simson's epistle has been lost, but it prompted from the Poet a rejoinder, which became a chief attraction of his Kilmarnock volume.

¹ Ochiltree Parish Register. The entries in the register relating to the baptisms of William Simson and his brother Patrick are made in Roman characters.

The Poet and his correspondent afterwards met, but the intimacy was not actively continued. Mr. Simson was on terms of friendship with Thomas Walker, tailor and poet at Poole near Ochiltree, who addressed to Burns the rhyming epistle included in some editions of his works, commencing "What waefu' news is this I hear?" Walker's composition, which refers to the Poet's affair with Jean Armour, and his proposal to leave the country, violently hortatory as it is, is believed under Simson's care to have been modified and abridged. As the Mossiel Bard had responded to Mr. Simson's rhymes, Walker anticipated a like favour, and had complained to his friend the schoolmaster of the Bard's inattention. Not long afterwards reached Poole a rhyming epistle, in the Poet's favourite measure, and to which was appended the name Robert Burns. This composition, commencing "What ails ye now, ye lousie b——" is generally included in the Poet's writings. It was ascribed to him in "Stewart's and Meikle's Tracts," published in 1799, but no MS. in the Poet's handwriting has been forthcoming to sustain the genuineness. On the other hand, Mr. James Paterson, in his *Contemporaries of Burns*, unhesitatingly ascribes the composition to Simson. Mr. Paterson adds:—

Tom Walker was exceedingly proud of the imagined reply of Burns, and lost no time in walking over to Ochiltree, to show the dominie the epistle. It required all the gravity of the latter to prevent a disclosure. He succeeded, however, and it is questionable whether the tailor was ever apprised of the true author of the reply. . . . Happening to meet Burns not long after this, Simson informed him of the liberty he had taken with his name. "You did well," said the Poet, laughing; "you have thrashed the tailor much better than I could have done."

Mr. Paterson wrote in 1840, while Mr. Simson's brother, Patrick, to whom he was personally known, was still living.¹

¹ *Contemporaries of Burns*, Edinb. 1840, pp. 64-78.

According to Mr. Paterson, William Simson composed other satiric poems at the expense of his friend, the tailor of Poole, but which he desired should not be printed. His humorous elegy on the Emperor Paul proceeds thus :—

The Emperor Paul was a plague to us all,
 And excited the wrath of our Navy ;
 But the moment he found we had weather'd the Sound,
 For shelter fled down to Sir Davie, auld Davie,
 Plump downward to dainty auld Davie.¹

Says Davie, What haste ? ye seemed to be chased ;
 Ay, chased wi' a witness, says Paul, sir ;
 Lord Nelson's got round, having weather'd the Sound,
 In spite of their powder and ball, sir, and all, sir,
 Yon forts and strong batteries all, sir.

Of Croningberg fort, he just made a sport ;
 He laughed at yon isles and flotillas ;
 As eagles would hons, he scatter'd the Danes,
 And sank all their craft in the billows, poor fellows,
 Quite tumbled them under the billows.

Our friends on the deep now daurna play peep,
 Afraid of some horrible evil ;
 For the story goes round, from the Nile to the Sound,
 That Nelson of Bront is a devil—sea devil ;
 For his prowess proclaims him a devil.

Since poor Copenhagen his Lordship is flegging,
 With grape, bomb, and ball helter-skelter ;
 Despoil'd of my rest, I dived from my nest,
 Plump down to your regions for shelter, grant shelter ;
 O Davie, do grant me some shelter !

¹ In allusion to *Davie's locker*, a sea term for death.

Says Davie to Paul, Be easy, poor saul,
 You are safe, and as welcome's a brither ;
 Come ben, take a seat by your mammie, auld Kate ;
 What a chance you wan down to your mither, safe hither !
 What a comfort to Kate, your auld mither !

In 1788 Mr. Simson was appointed parish schoolmaster of Cumnock, and he diligently fulfilled the duties of that office till his death, which took place on the 4th July 1815. His remains were consigned to the parish churchyard of Cumnock, and a tombstone at his grave chronicles the history of his family in the following legend :—

To the memory of William Simson, late schoolmaster of Cumnock, who died July 4th 1815, aged 57 years, and four of his children, viz. Patrick, who died 12th October 1813, aged 19 years ; Elizabeth, 17th November 1813, aged 14 years ; John died 19th January 1814, aged 22 years ; Andrew died 9th January 1817, aged 15 years. Sarah Hewatson, their mother, died 10th June 1834, aged 72 years.

The stone has been recently renovated, and the following lines, by Mr. A. B. Todd, added to the inscription :—

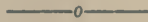
Here "Winsome Willie" lies, whose worth,
 In Burns woke equal love ;
 And death, which wrenched the ties on earth,
 Has knit them now above.

James Simson, another son of the schoolmaster of Cumnock, died at Ochiltree on the 24th December 1836, at the age of twenty-eight.

Mr. Simson's younger brother Patrick has, by Allan Cunningham, the Ettrick Shepherd, and others, been erroneously described as the "Winsome Willie" of the Poet's epistle. Patrick was born on Ten-Pound Land farm on the 8th April 1765 ; he entered on

the duties of tutor in a private family at Ochiltree in 1777, and in 1783 was appointed teacher at Straiton, in Carrick. In June 1788 he succeeded his brother in the parish school of Ochiltree. In 1833, when he had as a public instructor completed his fiftieth year, he was honoured with a jubilee dinner. He died in 1848, at the age of eighty-three. Skilful in the use of the pen, he, in his capacity as session-clerk at Ochiltree, transcribed a large portion of the parish register, which had suffered from imperfect custodiership. He was an expert classical and general scholar; he also wooed the Muse. By Sir Alexander Boswell he was entrusted with correcting the proof-sheets of the reprints issued from the Auchinleck press.

Patrick Simson married, in October 1792, Helen Howatson, daughter of William Howatson, farmer, Duntaggart, Ochiltree, sister of his brother William's wife; she died 4th June 1833, at the age of sixty-eight.



REV. JOHN SKINNER.

In both kingdoms Skinner was an early surname. In Sir Alexander Seton's account to the High Chamberlain of the taxation of Berwick, rendered on the 16th March 1330, a payment is denoted to William Skinner for sustaining a ward of the Crown. Among the disbursements of the Chamberlain of Scotland in the year 1337 are included certain costs incurred by Robert Skinner, who, by King David II., had been despatched with letters to Norway.¹ In the rental of St. Mary's Monastery of Cupar in 1542, "the late Dean Skinner" is

¹ Exchequer Rolls, i. 311, 450.

mentioned in connexion with a portion of garden ground.¹ Among the students of King's College, Aberdeen, enrolled in 1648, is named James Skinner, who appears in 1652 as a graduate.² Laurence Skinner graduated at the University of St. Andrews in 1603, and in 1615 was admitted minister of Dunlappie, Kincardineshire. He was afterwards translated to Novar, where he died in 1647, leaving two sons—Laurence, who succeeded him at Novar, and afterwards was translated to Brechin; and William, who became minister of Liff.³ Related to this family were John Skinner, described in 1662 as Provost of Brechin, and David Skinner, denoted as Bailie of Brechin in 1664.⁴

In the last decade of the seventeenth century, two brothers, George and James Skinner, were resident at Aberdeen, the former in the new town, the latter in the old. From the parish register we learn that both brothers belonged to the Episcopal Church. In the parish register under the 24th May 1693 is the following entry:—"George Skinner, indweller, and Anne Robertson, his spouse, had a daughter named Margaret, baptized by Mr. Andrew Burnet, minister; William Fettes, tailor, and James Hay, indweller, godfathers."⁵ The presence of "godfathers" at the baptism indicates that it was performed according to the Episcopal rite; while in the baptizer we recognise one who, then officiating as minister of the East Church,—to which he had been admitted in 1686 through the influence of the Lord Chancellor Perth,—was in 1695 deprived by Parliament for refusing the oath of allegiance to William and Mary, and was in 1716 deposed for praying for the Pretender.⁶ When, on the 6th October 1695, "James Skinner at

¹ Rental Book of Abbey of Cupar, ii. 209.

² *Fasti Aberdonensis*, 469, 514.

³ *Fasti Ecl. Scot.*, iii. 816, 834, 851.

⁴ Forfar Register of Sasines.

⁵ Aberdeen Register of Baptisms. In the Poll Book of Aberdeenshire for 1696, George

Skinner is described as one of the sub-tenants at Gilcomstone, and as without "free stock;" he and his wife are accordingly entered for personal cess only, the amount charged being twelve shillings Scots.

⁶ *Fasti Ecl. Scot.*, iii. 464.

Denburn" received baptism for his son, John, four persons present on the occasion, including his brother George, are named as "witnesses;" but the rite was performed "be Mr. Hamilton,"¹ who was an Episcopal clergyman.

John Skinner prosecuted his studies in Marischal College, where he completed his education in 1716.² Qualifying himself as a teacher, he was for his first appointment indebted to a kinsman. This was William Skinner, who rented the lands of Birsemore in Deeside, and who in the Poll Book of Aberdeenshire of 1696 is charged seven shillings and tenpence as his proportion of the valued rent of his farm, also 19s. 8d. in "the general poll" for himself and his wife. John Skinner taught a school at Balfour, near the farm of Birsemore, and which was the only seminary that the wild and mountainous parish of Birse then possessed. Not unsuccessful in his teaching, the young schoolmaster was also fortunate in his wooing. Among the heritors of Birse parish enrolled in the Poll Book, appears the name of Donald Farquharson of Balfour,³ with a valued rent of £216, 13s. 4d. His wife, a daughter of Gillanders of Highfield, a neighbouring landowner, was left a widow some time prior to 1720, for in that year she accepted as her second husband the Birsemore schoolmaster. Of the marriage was born at Birse, on the 3rd October 1721, a son, named John, the author of "Tullochgorum."

From the Grampian solitudes of Birse, John Skinner was, in 1723, transferred to the office of parish schoolmaster of Echt, a fertile and well-cultivated locality within twelve miles of Aberdeen.

¹ Old Machar Parish Register.

² Such was the information supplied by the author of "Tullochgorum," John Skinner's son, to Mr. Ramsay of Ochtertyre.—Ramsay's *Scotland and Scotsmen*, vol. i. p. 290, note.

³ Donald Farquharson of Balfour was grandfather of William Farquharson, M.D., President

in 1806-7 of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh. Dr. Farquharson died in 1823, leaving a son, Francis, M.D., who succeeded to the estate of Finzean, comprehending nearly half of the parish of Birse, and producing a present rental of upwards of £6000 a year.

Unhappily the pleasant and prosperous change was marred by a serious bereavement. Mrs. Skinner succumbed to a native delicacy, leaving her motherless child to the sole care of his surviving parent. During twelve years Mr. Skinner remained a widower, and he did not contract a second marriage till his son, the future poet, had become, through his judicious upbringing, a college student. In 1734 the youth gave evidence of scholastic power by his success in a public competition on entering Marischal College. At this college he passed through the Arts curriculum of four years, and was soon afterwards appointed usher in the parish school of Kemnay. After a short interval he was preferred to the office of assistant-teacher at Monymusk, and while in this situation he began to publicly evince his poetical aptitude. So early as his twelfth year he had composed verses, and at that age had committed to memory King James the First's popular ballad of "Chryste Kirk on the Green." He now founded on that poem a humorous composition descriptive of a local pastime, which he entitled, "The Monymusk Christmas Ba'ing."

"The Christmas Ba'ing," which was composed by Mr. Skinner in his nineteenth year, attracted the notice of Sir Archibald Grant, the lord of the manor, who, inviting the author to his residence, gave him access to his library. Towards the young poet-schoolmaster Lady Grant also exercised a kindly patronage, which was acknowledged by the dedication to her of a MS. collection of ten of his poetical compositions.

His progenitors being of the Episcopal persuasion, Mr. Skinner was by the family at Monymusk House encouraged to attach himself to the communion to which they had belonged. But this change implied no inconsiderable sacrifice, for the emoluments of a non-juring clergyman were generally meagre, and his personal security more than doubtful.

Determining at length to attach himself to the Church of his forefathers, Mr. Skinner began to attend the Episcopal chapel at Blairduff, a proceeding which implied the resignation of his office. He now had recourse to the counsel and assistance of Mr. Robert Forbes, Episcopal clergyman at Leith, a native of Aberdeenshire, and whose progenitors were ecclesiastically identified with his own. On Mr. Forbes's recommendation he was appointed private tutor to the only son of Mr. Sinclair of Scalloway, in Shetland. In the discharge of his office he remained at Scalloway two years, when, owing to the death of the elder Mr. Sinclair, and his pupil's removal to another locality, his engagement closed. He lamented Mr. Sinclair's death in an affecting elegy, and also prepared a Latin inscription for his tombstone. At Shetland he formed the intimacy of Mr. John Hunter, the Episcopal clergyman, who, in token of confidence, permitted him to wed his eldest daughter while he was yet without any immediate prospect of employment in the Church.

Returning from Shetland to his native county, Mr. Skinner was ordained a presbyter by Bishop Dunbar of Peterhead, and on the occurrence of a vacancy in the Episcopal church at Longside, he was, in November 1742, on the invitation of the members, instituted in the charge. His emoluments did not exceed forty pounds, and, as there was no parsonage, he rented a two-roomed cottage at Linshart, in the vicinity.

Though personally willing to subscribe the oath of allegiance and abjuration, also to pray for King George by name, Mr. Skinner was, consequent on the rebellion of 1745, subjected to persecution by the soldiers of the Duke of Cumberland,—his church was wrecked,—and, charged with breaking the law by preaching to more than four persons, he was, on the 26th May 1753, committed to prison at Aberdeen, and was there detained for six months. In prison he improved his acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue, thereby qualify-

ing himself for that critical study of the Old Testament Scriptures in which he afterwards excelled.

In the hope of making a better provision for his family, Mr. Skinner leased, in 1758, the farm of the Mains of Ludquharn, on the estate of Lord Errol. The adventure proved embarrassing, and after a seven years' ineffective struggle, the lease was abandoned. The lessee celebrated his emancipation by addressing to a friend a poetical epistle. He begins thus :—

You ask, my friend, whence comes this sudden flight,
Of parting thus with husbandry outright?
What mean I by so strange a foolish whim,
Am I in earnest, or think you I but dream?
True, you may think so, but suspend, I pray,
Your judgment, till you hear what I can say.
I join with you that there is no great harm
In clergy-folks to hold a little farm.

Mr. Skinner next dilates, in facetious strain, on the anxieties and perplexities in which agriculture had involved him. With a hearty humour he concludes :—

Thus farm and house demands come on together,
Both must be answered. I can answer neither.
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Why, then, I'll borrow! I have many a friend;
There's such and such a one, all rich, and surely kind.
Well, they're applied to, and behold the end—
They all condole, indeed, but cannot lend.
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.
Would any friend advise me thus to bear
Repeated strokes like these, from year to year?
No! th' event, be what it will, prepar'd am I,
And now resolv'd another course to try:

Sell corn and cattle off; pay every man;
 Get free of debt and duns as fast's I can;
 Give up the farm with all its wants, and then—
 Why, even take me to the book and pen,
 The fittest trade I find, for clergymen.

While he rented his unprofitable acres, Mr. Skinner had not, for the cultivation of the soil, abandoned his poetical activities. To the period of his farming belong the two most popular of his songs, "The Ewie wi' the Crookit Horn" and "Tullochgorum." The former he composed in response to a suggestion by his friend, Professor James Beattie, author of "The Minstrel," who had been personally solicited to write a pastoral song, but had contrived to produce these lines only,—

The ewie wi' the crookit horn,
 Sic a ewie was never born,
 Thereaboot nor far awa'.

Transmitting these lines to Mr. Skinner, Professor Beattie remarked that he was "the best qualified in Scotland" to compose a song suitable to the tune; and this favourable estimate was justified, inasmuch as the poet of Linshart followed up the key-note with a gentle pathos and inimitable humour. His song of "Tullochgorum" was suggested by Mrs. Montgomery, wife of the Inland Revenue officer in the village of Ellon. At the house of this gentlewoman Mr. Skinner and some of his brethren were spending an evening after a diocesan meeting which had been held in the place. A discussion arose on the subject of Whig and Tory politics, which threatened to wax hot; whereupon Mrs. Montgomery, to allay the debate, changed the subject with the remark, that she deplored the want of suitable words for some excellent Scottish airs. She then suggested that Mr. Skinner should forthwith compose a song to

the air of "Tullochgorum." Mr. Skinner consented, and in the opening stanza of the song thus referred to the occasion of its origin:—

Come gie's a sang, Montgomery cried,
And lay your disputes all aside ;
What signifies't for folks to chide
For what was done before them ?
Let Whig and Tory all agree, etc.

Though living apart from the public centres, the Longside pastor contrived to familiarize himself with contemporary literature. With the writings of the Ayrshire Bard he became acquainted at an early stage, regarding him with a hearty admiration. On the other hand, Burns was familiar with Mr. Skinner's minstrelsy, and would in his northern journey have paid him a visit if his locality had been known to him; he afterwards learned, not without chagrin, that he had passed within four miles of his residence at Linshart. When, in his progress homeward from Inverness, the Poet reached Aberdeen, he derived some compensation for missing the father by a cordial interview with his son. In his Diary, under the 10th September, he has this entry:—"Meet with Mr. Chalmers, printer, a facetious fellow. . . . Bishop Skinner, a non-juror, son of the author of 'Tullochgorum,' a man whose mild venerable manner is the most marked of any in so young a man." His casual interview with the Ayrshire Poet the Bishop in his next letter to his father related circumstantially. He wrote thus:—

Calling at the printing-office the other day, whom should I meet on the stair but the famous Burns, the Ayrshire Bard! And on Mr. Chalmers telling him that I was the son of "Tullochgorum," there was no help but I must step into

the inn hard by and drink a glass of wine with him and the printer. Our time was short, as he was just setting off for the south, and his companion hurrying him, but we had fifty "auld sangs" through hand, and spent an hour or so most agreeably. "Did not your father write 'The Ewie wi' the Crookit Horn'?" "Yes." "'Oh, an' I had the loon that did it!'" said he in a rapture of praise; "but tell him how I love, and esteem, and venerate his truly Scottish muse." On mentioning his "Ewie," and how you were delighted with it, he said it was all owing to yours, which had started the thought. He had been at Gordon Castle, and came by Peterhead. "Then," said I, "you were within four miles of 'Tullochgorum's' dwelling." Had you seen the look he gave, and so expressive of vexation; had he been your own son, you could not have wished a better proof of his affection. "Well," said he at parting, and shaking me by the hand as if he had been really my brother, "I am happy in having seen you, and thereby conveying my long-harboured sentiments of regard for your worthy sire; assure him of it in the heartiest manner, and that never did a devotee of the Virgin Mary go to Loretto with more fervour than I would have approached his dwelling and worshipped at his shrine." He was collecting in his tour all the "auld Scots sangs" he had not heard of, and likewise the tunes, that he may get them set to music. "Perhaps," said he, "your father might assist me in making this collection; or, if not, I should be happy in any way to rank him among my correspondents." "Then give me your direction, and it is probable you may hear from him some time or other." On this he wrote his direction on a slip of paper, which I have enclosed, that you may see it under his own hand. As to his personal appearance, it is very much in his favour. He is a genteel-looking young man, of good address, and talks with much propriety, as if he had received an academical education. He has, indeed, a flow of language, and seems never at a loss to express himself in the strongest and most nervous manner. On my quoting, with some sentiments of praise, the Ayrshire *plowman*, "Well," he said, "and a ploughman I was from my youth, and till within these two years had my shoes studded with a hundred *tackets*. But even then I was a reader, and had very nearly made all the English poets familiar to me, not forgetting the old bards of the best of all poetical books, the Old Testament."

"Tullochgorum" was not long in testifying to the Ayrshire Bard that he had received his message and his address. In a poetical

epistle to the Poet, dated from Linshart, the 25th September, he proceeds thus :—

Oh, happy hour for evermair,
 That led my chill' up Chalmers' stair,¹
 And ga'e him what he values sair,
 Sae braw a skance
 Of Ayrshire's dainty poet there
 By lucky chance.

Wae's my auld heart, I was na wi' you,
 Tho' worth your while I couldna gi'e you
 But sin' I had na hap to see you
 When ye was north,
 I'm bauld to send my service to you
 Hence o'er the Forth.

Sae proud's I am that ye hae heard
 O' my attempts to be a bard,
 And think my muse nae that ill-faur'd
 Seil o' your face !
 I wad na wish for mair reward
 Than your guid grace.

Your bonny beukie, line by line,
 I've read, and think it freely fine.
 Indeed I winna ca't divine
 As others might ;
 For that, ye ken, frae pen like mine,
 Wad no' be right.

But, by my sang, I dinna won'er
 That ye've admirers mony hun'er ;
 Let gowkit fleeps pretend to skunner,
 And tak' offence,
 Ye've naething said that leuks like blun'er
 To fowk o' sense.

¹ The stair of Mr. Chalmers' printing-office in Aberdeen, where Burns was when Bishop Skinner met him.

Your pawky "Drean" has humour in't ;
I never saw the like in print :
The Birthday Laurit durst na mint
 As ye hae dune ;
And yet there's nae a single hint
 Can be ill ta'en.

Your "Mailie," and your guid "Auld Mare,"
And "Hallow-even's" funny cheer—
There's nane that reads them far or near
 But reezes Robie,
And thinks them as diverting gear
 As Yorick's "Tobie."

But, oh, the weel-tauld "Cotter's Night"
Is what gi'es me the maist delight—
A piece sae finish'd and sae tight !
 There's nane o's a'
Cou'd preachment-timmer cleaner dight
 In kirk or ha'.

But what needs this or that to name ?
It's own'd by a' there's nae a theme
Ye tak' in hand, but's a' the same ;
 And nae ane o' them
But weel may challenge a' the fame
 That we can gi'e them.

For me, I heartily allow you
The world of praise sae justly due you ;
And but a PLOWMAN ! sall I trow you ?
 Gin it be sae,
A miracle I will allow you,
 Deny't wha may !

Sae, what avails a leash o' lair
Thro' seven lang years, and some guid mair,

Now, after a', ha'e me exquees'd
 For wissing nae to be refees'd ;
 I dinna covet to be reez'd
 For this fool lilt ;
 But, fool or wise, gin ye be pleas'd,
 Ye're welcome till't.

Sae, canty Plowman, fare ye weel ;
 Lord bless ye lang wi' hae and heal',
 And keep ye aye the honest chiel'
 That ye ha'e been ;
 Syne lift ye to a better biel'
 Whan this is dune.

P.S.

This auld Scots' muse I've courted lang,
 And spar'd nae pains to win her ;
 Dowf tho' I be in rustic sang,
 I'm no' a raw beginner.
 But now auld age tak's dowie turns,
 Yet, troth, as I'm a sinner,
 I'll aye be fond of Robie Burns
 While I can sign—JOHN SKINNER.

Deeply gratified by the honour bestowed upon him by his new correspondent, Burns replied to him in prose. In an undated letter, but which seems to have been posted on the 25th October, he addressed Mr. Skinner in these terms :—

REVEREND AND VENERABLE SIR, — Accept in plain dull prose my most sincere thanks for the best poetical compliment I ever received. I assure you, sir, as a poet you have conjured up an airy demon of vanity in my fancy, which the best abilities in your *other* capacity would be ill able to lay. I regret, and while I live I shall regret, that when I was in the North I had not the pleasure of paying a younger brother's dutiful respect to the author of the best Scotch song ever Scotland saw—"Tullochgorum's my delight !" The world may think

slightly of the craft of song-making, if they please; but, as Job says, "O that mine adversary had written a book!"—let them try. There is a certain something in the old Scotch songs, a wild happiness of thought and expression, which peculiarly marks them, not only from English songs, but also from the modern efforts of song-wrights, in our native manner and language. The only remains of this enchantment, these spells of the imagination, rests with you. Our true brother, Ross of Lochlee, was likewise "owre cannie," a "wild warlock," but now he sings among the "sons of the morning." I have often wished, and will certainly endeavour, to form a kind of common acquaintance among all the genuine sons of Caledonian song. The world, busy in low prosaic pursuits, may overlook most of us; but "reverence thyself." The world is not our *peers*, so we challenge the jury. We can lash that world, and find ourselves a very great source of amusement and happiness independent of that world. There is a work going on in Edinburgh just now, which claims your best assistance. An engraver in this town has set about collecting and publishing all the Scotch songs, with the music, that can be found. Songs in the English language, if by Scotchmen, are admitted, but the music must all be Scotch. Drs. Beattie and Blacklock are lending a hand, and the first musician in town presides over the department. I have been absolutely crazed about it, collecting old stanzas, and every information remaining respecting their origin, authors, etc. This last is but a very fragment-business; but at the end of his second number—the first is already published—a small account will be given of the authors, particularly to preserve those of later times. Your three songs—"Tullochgorum," "John of Badenyon," and "Ewie wi' the Crooked Horn"—go in this second number. I was determined before I got your letter to write you, begging that you would let me know where the editions of these pieces may be found, as you would wish them to continue in future times; and if you would be so kind to this undertaking as send any songs of your own or others that you would think proper to publish, your name will be inserted among the other authors, "*will ye, nill ye.*" One half of Scotland already give your songs to other authors. Paper is done. I beg to hear from you—the sooner the better, as I leave Edinburgh in a fortnight or three weeks.—I am, with the warmest sincerity, sir, your obliged humble servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

To the request that he would render aid in the new collection

(Johnson's *Museum*), the Longside poet hastened to reply. He wrote thus :—

LINSHART, 14th Nov. 1787.

SIR,—Your kind return without date, but of postmark October 25th, came to my hand only this day : and to testify my punctuality to my poetic engagement, I sit down immediately to answer it in kind. Your acknowledgment of my poor but just encomiums on your surprising genius, and your opinion of my rhyming excursions, are both, I think, by far too high. The difference between our two tracks of education and ways of life is entirely in your favour, and gives you the preference every manner of way. I know a classical education will not create a versifying taste, but it mightily improves and assists it ; and though, where both these meet, there may sometimes be ground for approbation, yet where taste appears single, as it were, and neither cramped nor supported by acquisition, I will always sustain the justice of its prior claim to applause. A small portion of taste this way I have had almost from childhood, especially in the old Scottish dialect ; and it is as old a thing as I remember, my fondness for “Chryste Kirk o’ the Green,” which I had by heart ere I was twelve years of age, and which some years ago I attempted to turn into Latin verse. While I was young I dabbled a good deal in these things ; but on getting the black gown I gave it pretty much over, till my daughters grew up, who, being all tolerably good singers, plagued me for words to some of their favourite tunes, and so extorted those effusions which have made a public appearance beyond my expectations, and contrary to my intentions — at the same time that I hope there is nothing to be found in them uncharacteristic or unbecoming the cloth, which I would always wish to see respected. As to the assistance you propose from me in the undertaking you are engaged in, I am sorry I cannot give it so far as I could wish, and you perhaps expect. My daughters, who were my only intelligencers, are all *foris familiate*, and the old woman, their mother, has lost that taste. There are two from my own pen, which I might give you if worth the while. One to the old Scotch tune of “Dumbarton’s Drums.” The other perhaps you have met with, as your noble friend the Duchess has, I am told, heard of it. It was squeezed out of me by a brother parson in her neighbourhood, to accommodate a new Highland reel for the Marquis’s birthday to the stanza of

Tune your fiddles, tune them sweetly, etc.

If this last answer your purpose, you may have it from a brother of mine, Mr. James Skinner, writer in Edinburgh, who, I believe, can give the music too. There is another humorous thing I have heard, said to have been done by the Catholic priest, Geddes, and which hit my taste much :—

There was a wee wifeikie was comin' frae the fair
 Had gotten a little drappikie which bred her meikle care ;
 It took upo' the wifie's heart, and she began to spew,
 And co' the wee wifeikie, I wish I binna fou.
 I wish, etc.

I have heard of another new composition by a young plowman of my acquaintance, that I am vastly pleased with, to the tune of the "Humours of Glen," which I fear won't do, as the music, I am told, is of Irish original. I have mentioned these, such as they are, to show my readiness to oblige you, and to contribute my mite, if I could, to the patriotic work you have in hand, and which I wish all success to. You have only to notify your mind, and what you want of the above shall be sent you. Meantime, while you are thus publicly, I may say, employed, do not sheath your own proper and piercing weapon. From what I have seen of yours already, I am inclined to hope for much good. One lesson of virtue and morality delivered in your amusing style, and from such as you, will operate more than dozens would do from such as me, who shall be told it is our employment, and be never more minded. Whereas, from a pen like yours, as being one of the many, what comes will be admired. Admiration will produce regard, and regard will leave an impression, especially when *example goes along*.

Now binna saying I'm ill bred,
 Else by my troth I'll no' be glad ;
 For cadgers, ye hae heard it said,
 And sic like fry,
 Maun ay be harlin' in their trade,
 And sae maun I.

Wishing you from my poet-pen all success, and in my other character all happiness and heavenly direction, I remain, with esteem, your sincere friend,

JOHN SKINNER.

The Poet's next letter to his northern correspondent is dated

Edinburgh, the 14th February 1788. After apologizing for his silence, he proceeds:—

I must beg your pardon for the epistle you sent appearing in the Magazine. I had given a copy or two to some of my intimate friends, but did not know of the printing of it till the publication of the Magazine. However, as it does great honor to us both, you will forgive it. The second volume of the songs I mentioned to you in my last is published to-day. I send you a copy, which I beg you will accept as a mark of the veneration I have long had, and shall ever have for your character, and of the claim I make to your continued acquaintance. Your songs appear in the third volume, with your name in the index; as I assure you, sir, I have heard your "Tullochgorum," particularly among our west country-folks, given to many different names, and most commonly to the immortal author of "The Minstrel," who indeed never wrote anything superior to "Gie's a sang, Montgomery cried." Your brother has promised me your verses to the Marquis of Huntly's reel, which certainly deserve a place in the collection. My kind host, Mr. Cruikshank of the High School here, and said to be one of the best Latins in this age, begs me to make you his grateful acknowledgments for the entertainment he has got in a Latin publication of yours that I borrowed for him from your acquaintance, and my much-respected friend in this place, the Rev. Dr. Webster. Mr. Cruikshank maintains that you write the best Latin since Buchanan. I leave Edinburgh to-morrow, but shall return in three weeks. Your song you mentioned in your last, to the tune of "Dumbarton's Drums," and the other, which you say was done by a brother in trade of mine, a ploughman, I shall thank you for a copy of each.—I am ever, reverend sir, with the most respectful esteem and sincere veneration, yours,

ROBERT BURNS.

To this communication Mr. Skinner made the following answer:—

LINSHART, 28th April 1788.

DEAR SIR,—I received your last with the curious present you have favoured me with, and would have made proper acknowledgments before now, but that I have been necessarily engaged in matters of a different complexion. And now that I have got a little respite, I make use of it to thank you for this valuable instance of your good-will, and to assure you that, with the sincere heart of a

true Scotchman, I highly esteem both your gift and the giver; as a small testimony of which I have herewith sent you, for your amusement (and in a form, which I hope you will excuse, for saving postage), the two songs I wrote about to you already. "Charming Nancy," is the real production of genius in a plowman of twenty years of age at the time of its appearing, with no more education than what he picked up at an old farmer grandfather's fireside. And, I doubt not, you will find in it a simplicity and delicacy, with some turns of humour, that will please one of your taste; at least, it pleased me when I first saw it, if that can be any recommendation to it. The other¹ is entirely descriptive of my own sentiments, and you may make use of one or both, as you shall see good. You will oblige me by presenting my respects to your host, Mr. Cruikshank, who has given such high approbation to my poor "Latinity." You may let him know that, as I have likewise been a dabbler in Latin poetry, I have two things that I would, if he desires it, submit, not to his judgment, but to his amusement; the one, a translation of "Chryste Kirk o' the Green," printed at Aberdeen some years ago; the other, "Batrachomyomachia Homeri Latinis vestita cum additamentis," given in lately to Chalmers to print if he pleases. Mr. C. will know "Seria non semper delectant, non joca semper. Semper delectant seria mixta jocis." I have just room to repeat compliments and good wishes, from, sir, your humble servant,

JOHN SKINNER.

In the several editions of Mr. Skinner's metrical compositions is included a jocund remonstrance with Burns's "Address to a Louse." As this satirical composition appears in the Kilmarnock edition, it is not improbable that Tullochgorum's strictures upon it had preceded the epoch of his correspondence with the writer. But a few of the verses may here be introduced not inappropriately:—

A lousie on a lady's bonnet!
 Disgracefu' dirgy, fie upon it!
 An' you, forsooth, to write a sonnet
 On sic a theme!
 Guid fa' me, man, I wad na done it
 For a' your fame.

¹ Mr. Skinner refers to his composition beginning, "O, why should old age so much wound us!" written to the tune of "Dumbarton's Drums."

Nae doubt your ballad's wise and witty ;
But fowks will say it was na pretty
To yoke sic twa in conjunct ditty,
 Them baith to hit ;
And ca' you but a twa-fac'd nitty,
 Wi' a' your wit.

For a' your being a bard of note,
Ye shou'd na minded sic a mote,
To mak' a warl's wonner o't,
 As ye hae dane ;
But past it for an orra spot
 Whare't shou'd na been.

.
When ye bemoan'd the herryt mousie
Rinning as gin't had been frae pousie ;
When counter-nib down-stroy'd her housie,
 Ye pleas'd us a'.
But thus to lilt about a lousie,
 Black be your fa' !

.
Fouk wad do well to steek their een
At sights that shou'd na a' be seen,
Or whan they see, lat jokes alane,
 Gin they had sense ;
For little jokes hae aften gi'en
 Fell great offence.

.
Sae, Robie Burns, tak' tent in time,
And keep mair haivins wi' your rhyme,
Else you may come to rue the crime
 O' sic a sonnet,
And wiss ye had ne'er seen a styme
 O' louse nor bonnet.

Indifferent to fame as a writer of verses, Mr. Skinner sought to excel in another department of letters. In 1746 he published a pamphlet in defence of his Church, entitled *A Preservative against Presbytery*. A performance of greater effort, published in 1757, gained the unqualified commendation of Bishop Sherlock. In this production, entitled, *A Dissertation on Jacob's Prophecy*, which was intended as a supplement to a treatise on the same subject by Dr. Sherlock, Mr. Skinner has established, by a critical examination of the Hebrew original, that the words in Jacob's prophecy¹ rendered "sceptre" and "lawgiver" in the Authorized Version, ought to be translated "tribeship" and "typifier," a difference of interpretation which obviates some difficulties respecting the exact fulfilment of the prediction. In a pamphlet, printed in 1767, he further vindicated the claims of the Scottish Episcopal Church; and on this occasion against the alleged misrepresentations of Mr. Norman Sievwright, English clergyman at Brechin, who had published a work reflecting unfavourably on Scottish Episcopacy. His most important work, *An Ecclesiastical History of Scotland from the first Appearance of Christianity in that Kingdom*, appeared in 1788, in two octavo volumes. This publication, arranged in the form of letters, and dedicated in Latin verse to his son, Bishop Skinner, did not attain any wide acceptance. His other prose works were published in 1809, in two octavo volumes, together with a memoir of the author, by his son, Bishop Skinner. These embrace "Letters addressed to Candidates for Orders," a "Dissertation on the Shekinah," and "An Essay towards a Literal Exposition of the Song of Songs." A third volume of his remains was added, containing his compositions in Latin verse, and his songs and ballads.

Though averse to public display, Mr. Skinner was possessed of mental energy of a high order. As a clergyman he enjoyed the

¹ Genesis xlix. 10.

affection of his people. Besides efficiently discharging his ministerial duties, he gratuitously exercised the function of a physician, having attained a knowledge of the healing art during his attendance at the University. His pulpit discourses were instructive and edifying, but more as the result of his peculiar promptitude than of any laboured preparation. He abandoned the aid of the manuscript, on account of the untoward occurrence of his notes being scattered by a startled fowl in the early part of his ministry.

Among Mr. Skinner's more cherished correspondents were Dr. Gleig, Bishop of Brechin, Dr. Doig of Stirling, and John Ramsay of Ochtertyre. In 1792 Mr. Ramsay visited Mr. Skinner at Lins-hart, accompanied by Dr. Gleig, and again in 1795, in company with Dr. Doig. Of these visits he has presented a narrative, which has lately been published. In reference to the visit of 1792, Mr. Ramsay writes:—

Our host met us at a little distance from the house. His figure was portly and pleasing; his countenance, considered as an index to his mind, served to prepossess us in his favour. Although then in his seventieth year, and lately recovered from a painful illness, he looked like a man of fifty, such was the freshness of his appearance, joined to the colour of his hair, which was coal-black, except two tufts on his cheeks which were grey. He then conducted us into his house, which was much too mean for such an inhabitant. It is only one storey high, like a tenant's mansion, but larger, and ornamented with sash-windows. The inside was somewhat between a minister's manse and a farmer's steading. Nothing could be plainer or more primitive than the furniture, and we were not a little surprised at not seeing a single chimney in the house—the fuel, which is peat, being burned on the hearth . . . But what the place wanted in amenity, or his mansion in show or convenience, was amply compensated to us by the originality and brilliancy of our host's conversation, which was heightened by the courtesy and cordiality with which he entertained us. I had sometimes been in the company of men of first-rate wit and genius, but never saw one whose social hour was more truly delightful and instructive than that of Mr. Skinner.

In connexion with his visit to Linshart in 1795, Mr. Ramsay expresses the satisfaction enjoyed by himself and Dr. Doig in being present in his homely place of worship when their venerated friend conducted service with much simplicity and earnestness.¹

In 1799 Mr. Skinner was overwhelmed by a heavy trial in the death of his attached wife—his companion for fifty-eight years. To his grief he gave expression in a Latin elegy. After a ministry at Longside of sixty-five years, Mr. Skinner accepted his son's invitation to reside with him at Aberdeen. Of his new abode he had become an occupant only a few days, when he died, on the 16th June 1807, after a very brief illness. His remains were conveyed to the churchyard of Longside, and at his grave was afterwards reared by his flock a handsome monument, with an inscription, strongly testifying as to his pastoral worth and personal virtues. Some considerable time before his death Mr. Skinner was appointed Dean of Aberdeen, but the title was accepted by him only at meetings of the clergy. A work descriptive of Mr. Skinner's *Life and Times*, issued in 1883 by the Rev. William Walker, Episcopal clergyman at Monymusk, and accompanied with a portrait, presents an exhaustive account of his personal history.

Mr. Skinner married, on the 12th November 1741, Grizel, eldest daughter of Mr. John Hunter, Episcopal clergyman at Shetland, with issue four sons and six daughters.

Of the daughters, Christiana and Grizel, twins, the latter first of the name, were baptized on 2nd May 1745.

Elizabeth, baptized 12th July 1746, married Alexander Cumming, with issue, two sons, John and Robert. Robert died young. John, born in 1770, became Mr. Skinner's colleague and successor, and in 1834 was elected Dean of Aberdeen. He died in 1849.

¹ *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, from the MSS. of John Ramsay, Esq. of Ochtertyre, Edinb., 2 vols, 8vo, 1888, vol. i. pp. 535-542.

Grizel, second of the name, baptized 22nd August 1748, married, 23rd January 1776, William Nicolson, and proceeded with her husband to Norway.¹ She died without issue.

Margaret, baptized 14th October 1753, married without issue.

Mariana, baptized 13th January 1757,² married without issue.

James, the eldest son, was born at Sumbroughgerth, Shetland, on the 22nd November 1742.³ After being some time under the care of his grandfather at Echt, he engaged in a seafaring life, but eventually settled as a merchant in Philadelphia. Some time previous to the year 1789 he died unmarried.

Marianus, the third son, emigrated to America, and there died young and unmarried.

Alexander, fourth son, baptized at Longside on the 25th February 1751,⁴ followed his two elder brothers to America, and there died unmarried.

John, the second son, was baptized at Longside on the 7th May 1744. Placed under the care of his grandfather at Echt, he thereafter entered the University of Aberdeen, where he graduated. He next became tutor in the family of Sir Hugh Paterson of Bannockburn, while he occupied his leisure in theological studies. At the age of twenty he was ordained deacon by Bishop Gerrard of Aberdeen, and was soon afterwards instituted in the pastorate of the Episcopal church at Ellon. The scanty emoluments of his cure he supplemented by renting a farm; he also improved his condition by a prosperous marriage. After efficiently discharging at Ellon the pastoral duties for eleven years, he, in 1775, was transferred to the incumbency of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church at Aberdeen. On the

¹ Mr. John Hunter's "Diary," quoted by Mr. Walker in his *Life and Times*. Lond. 1883, 2nd edit., p. 23.

² Longside Baptismal Register.

³ Mr. John Hunter's "Diary."

⁴ Longside Parish Register.

25th September 1782 he was consecrated as coadjutor to Bishop Kilgour of Aberdeen, on whose resignation in 1786 he became sole bishop. The venerable pastor of Linshart was at first named to the office, but he recommended the appointment of his son. In 1788 Bishop Skinner was elected Primus. Along with his father, he, on the 29th August 1789, was admitted an honorary burghess of Aberdeen. He died in 1816.

Bishop John Skinner married, 17th August 1765, Mary, only daughter of the Rev. William Robertson, incumbent of the Episcopal Church, Dundee, and formerly of Longside, with issue five sons and three daughters.

Jean, the eldest daughter, baptized 16th July 1766, died unmarried.

Grizel, the second daughter, baptized 26th February 1768, died in 1776.

Mary, the third daughter, baptized 12th June 1771, married Alexander Dalgarno, merchant in Aberdeen, with issue two daughters, who predeceased their parents.

Of the Bishop's five sons, two died in infancy. John, the eldest surviving son, was born at Ellon, and there baptized on the 20th August 1769. Early sent to Linshart, he became a favourite of his grandfather, who made rhymes for his diversion. But the youth was considerably disconcerted by an alleged poetical prophecy of Thomas the Rhymer, which seemed to have some reference to himself. The prediction ran thus:—

The world shall four John Skinners see :

The first shall teach a school ;

The other two shall parsons be ;

The fourth shall be a fool.

Determined to overcome the seer's supposed vaticination, the fourth

John also chose the clerical profession. On the 24th February 1790, he received orders, and shortly thereafter he officiated in Linshart chapel at the same diet of worship with his father and grandfather. The occasion was suitable for recalling the Rhymer's prophecy, and it was done by the genial grandfather in these lines of elegant Latin :—

Sanguinis ejusdem tres implent rostra Joannes,
 Est avus, est pater, est carus utrique nepos :
 Ingenuo primus sermonis laude secundus
 Claret; in ambobus tertius ille nitet.
 Non potuere ultra Naturæ tendere vires,
 Miscet Aro Patrem, et fingitur inde Nepos !

By a friend of the grandson these lines were thus rendered in English :—

Of the same blood in pulpit now *three* Johns appear,—
Grandfather, *father*, and (alike to both) a *grandson* dear :
 The *first* for genius, the *second* for the preacher's art,
 In both of which the *third* now plays a shining part ;
 The powers of Nature's self no farther stretch could bear,
 The *son* she with the *father* blends, and does the *grandson* rear.

John Skinner, eldest grandson of the Longside pastor, commenced his ministry in charge of the small Episcopal congregation at Montrose. The revenues of the cure were miserably attenuated, but, after a brief interval, a more satisfactory appointment offered at Banff. It was accepted, much to the annoyance of the adherents of the Montrose chapel, some of whom rudely gave out that their minister had left them in the hope of prospering by the ham-curing wealth of his Banff hearers. The imputation reached the ears of the young minister and vexed him, but when "Tullochgorum" heard of the foolish imputation, he subdued his grandson's

chagrin, and intensified that of his accusers, by composing these lines :—

Had Skinner been of carnal mind,
As strangely ye suppose ;
Or had he e'en been fond of swine,
He ne'er had left Montrose.

In 1797 Mr. Skinner became incumbent of the Episcopal church of Forfar. He subsequently obtained ecclesiastical rank as Dean of Dunkeld and Dunblane.

In 1818 he issued an octavo volume entitled, *Annals of Scottish Episcopacy from 1788 to 1816*, accompanied with a memoir of his father. He died 2nd September 1841. He married, first, 19th August 1798, Elizabeth, daughter of John Ure, sheriff-clerk and Provost of Forfar.¹ The event was celebrated by the incumbent of Longside in a poem of fifty-three lines, which has been included in the third volume of his posthumous works.

Mrs. Skinner succumbed to a consumptive ailment on the 12th May 1820, and Mr. Skinner married, secondly, in 1822, Innes, eldest daughter of John Duff, merchant, Dundee, by his wife, Anne Ogilvy, elder daughter of Sir John Ogilvy, fourth baronet of Inverquharity ; she was born 8th October 1780, and died 23rd April 1872, at the age of ninety-two.

By his first marriage the Rev. John Skinner had issue six sons and four daughters.

Margaret, the eldest daughter, was born 12th May 1799, and died 24th November 1800.

Mary Robertson, second daughter, born 11th April 1802, died 7th February 1817.

Anne Strachan, third daughter, was born 2nd September 1810.

¹ Forfar Marriage Register.

Grace Jane, fourth daughter, was born 22nd January 1817.

John, the eldest son, born 24th August 1800, engaged in merchandise at Calcutta, and there died in 1844. He married Mary Gavin Elizabeth, daughter of Hope Steuart of Ballechin, Perthshire, with issue four sons and two daughters.

John, the eldest son, born in 1837, assumed his mother's family name on succeeding his maternal grandfather in the estate of Ballechin. He married, in 1862, Caroline Anna, daughter of Sir Albert de H. Larpent, Bart., with issue John Malcolm, born in 1863.

George Ure, second son of Dean Skinner, by his first wife, Elizabeth Ure, was born 18th March 1804. Settling as a merchant at Guatemala, in Central America, he attained opulence. Devoted to scientific pursuits, he became eminent as a naturalist, introducing into Great Britain, from the wilds of Guatemala, some of the finest Orchidaceæ. Of these are named after him—*Barkeria Skinneri*, *Cattleya Skinneri*, *Lycaste Skinneri*, and several others. Among his rarer discoveries is the beautiful *Odontoglossum grande*. An intelligent ornithologist, he introduced into this country from Guatemala about twenty species of birds. While at Paraiso, near Panama, where he had gone in search of the scarlet passion-flower, which he there found, he was seized with yellow fever, and died after a short illness on the 9th January 1867. By his wife, a daughter of the Rev. Oliver Raymond, rector of Middleton, Essex, he had two daughters, who are both married, with issue.

William, third son of Dean Skinner, born 8th August 1806, practised as an advocate in Aberdeen; he there died in 1861. He married Emily Forsyth, with issue four sons and a daughter. John, his eldest son, is a merchant in Calcutta; he is married with issue.

Charles Binny, fourth son of Dean Skinner, was born 21st

August 1808. Formerly a merchant in Calcutta, he now resides at 57 Eccleston Square, London. He married, in 1830, Frances Mary, daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Andrewes, 13th Light Dragoons, with issue three sons and five daughters.

James, sixth son of Dean Skinner, was born at Forfar on the 23rd June 1818. In 1832 he became a student of Marischal College, and in the following year entered the University of Durham, where he afterwards graduated. After some time acting as one of the Masters of King William's College, Isle of Man, he took orders in the English Church. In July 1845 he was appointed chaplain of the military prison at Southsea, and in the following year he became military chaplain at Corfu. On his return to England he accepted the curacy of St. Barnabas, Pimlico, and after some changes was instituted in the Church living of Newland, Malvern Link, where he ministered till his death, which took place on the 29th December 1881. A noted ritualist, Mr. Skinner was eminently devoted in his ministerial labours.¹ He married, on the 18th July 1848, Agnes, daughter of the Rev. Oliver Raymond, rector of Middleton, Essex, with issue a daughter, Agnes Raymond, who died on the 6th February 1868, in her eighteenth year.

Alexander, second son of Bishop John Skinner, was born at Aberdeen, and there baptized on the 19th December 1775. In emigrating to America he was lost at sea.

William, third and youngest son, was born at Aberdeen on the 27th October 1778.² Ordained a deacon in 1802, and a priest in 1803, he was elected Bishop of Aberdeen 27th October 1816, and on the 2nd June 1841 was chosen Primus. He died 15th April 1857. By his wife, Jean Johanna, daughter of James Brand, cashier of the Aberdeen Banking Company, he had a daughter,

¹ *James Skinner, A Memoir*, by the Author of *Charles Lowder*, Lond. 1883.

² Aberdeen Parish Register.

Mary. Born in 1806, she married, 26th June 1832, the Rev. David Wilson, Dean of Aberdeen, and died 14th October 1864. Of the marriage were born six sons and five daughters.

James, the eldest son, has settled as an estate agent in New South Wales.

William, the second son, B.A. of Oriel College, Oxford, was incumbent of Meniwa, New South Wales, and attained to a position of influence in the English Church of Australia; he died in 1883, at the age of forty-seven.

David, third son, is H.M. Commissioner for the Northern Province of Trinidad.

Alexander, fourth son, is senior partner in the firm of Jardine, Skinner, & Co., merchants, Calcutta. As High Sheriff of Calcutta, he in 1887 received the honour of knighthood.

Charles, fifth son, died young.

John Skinner, sixth son, is B.A. of St. Catherine's College, Cambridge. In 1872 he was appointed incumbent of Christ's Church, Kincardine O'Neil; in 1876, assistant and successor to his father at All Saints, Woodhead, Fyvie, and in 1885 incumbent of St. George's Chapel, Edinburgh.

Johanna, eldest daughter, married, in June 1861, the Rev. A. A. Jenkins, incumbent of St. Peter's Church, Galashiels. Mary, second daughter, born in January 1840, died in infancy. Mary Grace, third daughter, is unmarried. Elizabeth Hargreave, fourth daughter, is unmarried. Alice Gordon, fifth daughter, married, in August 1881, George Grant, merchant, Trinidad.

John Skinner, schoolmaster of Echt (father of the author of "Tullochgorum"), married, secondly, on the 10th July 1735, Elizabeth Cattanaeh;¹ she died in 1775. Of the marriage were born four sons; also three daughters—Sophia, baptized 10th July

¹ Echt Parish Register.

1738 ; Jean, baptized 3rd April 1740 ; and Henrietta, baptized 30th April 1747.¹

Thomas, first son of the marriage, baptized 6th May 1736, graduated M.A. at the University of St. Andrews in 1753. He became parish schoolmaster of Banchory Ternan, and there died in 1816, without leaving issue. William, the second son, was born 5th September 1742, and died, without issue, on the 26th December 1772. Robert, the third son, was born 18th February 1745, and died 8th November 1767, without issue. James, fourth son of John Skinner and Elizabeth Cattanach, was born at Echt, on the 23rd March 1751. Engaging in legal pursuits, he became a Writer to the Signet. He died at Edinburgh on the 10th February 1840, at the age of eighty-nine. In 1779 he married Janet, daughter of the Rev. William Forbes, minister of the Episcopal church, Musselburgh, with issue a son, John Robert, born in 1786. He practised as a Writer to the Signet, and died in 1849. He married, in 1814, Anne Black of Brechin (who died in 1868), with issue three sons.

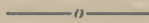
William, of Corra, the eldest son, born in 1823, is a Writer to the Signet. He was some time one of the magistrates of Edinburgh, and is now town-clerk of the city. He married, first, in 1850, Joanna Kirk of Drumstenhall, Kirkeudbright (who died 1866), with issue three sons, Robert Riddell Kirk, William, and Charles ; also three daughters ; secondly, in 1880, Charlotte Enmengarde Warren, co-heiress of Longford, Market Drayton, Shropshire, with issue a son, Percy, and a daughter, Nora.

Thomas, second son of John Robert Skinner, W.S., born in 1825, is a doctor of medicine. He married, in 1859, Hannah, co-heiress of Henry Hilton of Fairgirth, Kirkeudbrightshire, with issue a son, Hilton, born 1862, and a daughter, Agnes.

Robert, third son of John Robert Skinner and Anne Black, was

¹ Echt Parish Register.

born in 1827. A clerk in orders, he holds office as chaplain to the British Legation at Berne. He married Annie H. Saugster of Aberdeen,¹ with issue four sons and five daughters. Thomas, the eldest son, resides in Calcutta.



WILLIAM SMELLIE.

THE surname of Smellie, formerly Smyllie and Smallie, is of uncertain derivation. The lodge of St. Mary's Chapel have in keeping a deed of submission between certain members of the journeyman masons and the deacons of the wrights and masons, dated 8th January 1715; among the latter appearing the name of William Smellie, described as "present deacon of the masons of Edinburgh." William Smellie obtained considerable opulence, and, being a person of exemplary character, was elected an elder of the Tolbooth parish. He was succeeded in business by his son Alexander, who also practised as an architect. From his own design he erected the Martyrs' Tomb in the Greyfriars Churchyard.

Alexander Smellie had two sons and three daughters. John, the elder son, followed the building trade, and considerably prospered; he married Agnes, sister of Mr. James Ferrier, Clerk of Session. Ann, the eldest daughter, married Mr. Mabon, a ship-master in Leith; Helen, the second daughter, died unmarried; and Elizabeth, the third daughter, married Mr. Duff, merchant in London.

William Smellie, the younger son, forms the subject of the present memoir. Born in the Pleasance, a suburb of Edinburgh, in 1740, he received his elementary education at the parish school of

¹ Aberdeen Parish Register.

Duddingston, and at the age of ten entered the High School. By his parents intended for the occupation of a staymaker, he was rescued from this untoward calling by a difference between his father and his proposed master as to the terms of his indenture. On the 1st of October 1752 he was apprenticed to Messrs. Hamilton, Balfour, & Neil, printers, and with the permission of his employers he attended classes in the University; he also devoted his evenings to self-improvement. When in 1757 the Philosophical Society offered a prize for the most accurate edition of a Latin classic, he produced a duodecimo edition of Terence, set up as well as edited by himself, which procured the honours of the competition, a silver medal, to the printing firm which he served. With a view to improving his circumstances, he, in September 1759, entered into an engagement with Messrs. Murray & Cochrane, printers, as a corrector of the press, and as assistant in the editing of the *Scots Magazine*. Ardent in the pursuit of knowledge, he continued his attendance on University classes, including those of theology and medicine. And that he might intelligently superintend the printing of Professor Robertson's Hebrew grammar, he attended the University class of Oriental languages. To the study of botany devoting special attention, he in 1765 produced a dissertation on the sexes of plants, in which he opposed the opinions of Linnæus; it secured the gold medal of Dr. Hope, Professor of Botany in the University, and was afterwards published in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. When Professor Hope was by illness incapacitated for his duties as a lecturer, he entrusted his class duties to Mr. Smellie. A printing partnership which he entered into with Robert and William Auld in 1765 was connected with the publication of the *Weekly Journal*, which he personally edited, but the concern, proving unprofitable, was dissolved in 1771.

As Lord Kames was passing through the press of Messrs. Murray

& Cochrane, the sheets of his *Elements of Criticism*, his Lordship received a series of anonymous criticisms on the work which much interested him. Having discovered that Mr. Smellie was the writer, he became deeply concerned in his welfare, and on his forming in 1771 a partnership with Mr. Balfour in the printing business, he provided him with a cash credit for £300; this partnership, after subsisting for eleven years, was dissolved in 1782. Among the works issued from the press of Messrs. Balfour & Smellie was Dr. William Buchan's *Domestic Medicine*; it was, prior to being placed in the hands of the compositors, wholly re-written by Mr. Smellie, and materially improved by his suggestions. By their correspondence it appears that Dr. Buchan entertained so high an opinion of his coadjutor that he urged him to abandon business, and qualify himself as a physician. While he declined this counsel, he was induced to further familiarize himself with the science of medicine; also to engage with increased ardour in the study of natural history.

When in 1771 the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was started, Mr. Smellie was by the projectors, Mr. Andrew Bell and Mr. Colin Macfarquhar, retained as editor and compiler; he composed the principal articles in the work, and revised all the others, while his remuneration in connexion with the entire work, which extended to three quarto volumes, did not exceed two hundred pounds. In 1773 Mr. Smellie, in conjunction with Dr. Gilbert Stuart, commenced the *Edinburgh Magazine and Review*, and, notwithstanding the imprudent and reckless conduct of his literary collaborateur, he continued to carry on the serial till the completion of the fifth volume in 1776. When in 1775 the chair of Natural History in the University became vacant, he offered himself as a candidate, and obtained a large measure of support, but Dr. John Walker of Moffat was ultimately preferred. In 1781 he was appointed Superintendent of the

Museum of Natural History in connexion with the Society of Antiquaries, of which he was an original member. His annotated translation of Buffon's *Natural History*, in nine octavo volumes, commenced in 1780, was completed in the following year; it passed into five successive editions.

In 1783 Mr. Smellie issued an *Account of the Institution and Progress of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, and to this added a second part in the following year. He was appointed printer to the Society, and afterwards secretary. On behalf of the institution he prepared a plan for procuring a statistical account of Scottish parishes, and upon his method the undertaking was afterwards carried out by the parochial clergy, under the patriotic auspices of Sir John Sinclair. When Burns came to Edinburgh in November 1786, Mr. Smellie was associated in a printing partnership with Mr. Creech, and when the latter had arranged with the Poet to publish his second edition, he conducted him into their printing-office. The business was carried on at the foot of the Anchor Close, and there the Poet frequently presented himself, not more to receive and correct the proof-sheets of his poems, than to hold converse with the accomplished printer. An anecdote illustrative of the Poet's reputation at this early stage of his career has been related on the authority of Mr. Alexander Smellie, the printer's son. In correcting his proof-sheets Burns was in the habit of occupying a particular stool, which became known by his name. As he one day came to the office to engage in the usual revision, his favourite stool was occupied by Sir John Dalrymple, whose *Essay on the Properties of Coal Tar* was then being printed. On receiving his proofs, the Poet looked about for his stool, and was requested to enter the composing-room. When he had gone, one of the attendants offered Sir John another seat, remarking that the stool he sat upon was to be used by the person who had just entered. "No,

I won't give up my seat to that impudent staring fellow," said the Baronet. "That is Robert Burns," replied the attendant. "Burns!" said Sir John, rising up. "Let him have all the seats in your house."

Singularly industrious both in the exercise of his vocation as a printer, also in his literary and scientific pursuits, Mr. Smellie loved recreation, and was abundantly convivial. There was at the head of the narrow alley in which he worked his types a famous tavern kept by Daniel Douglas, a native of the Highlands. In this place of antique construction, which on some solitary occasion had been occupied by Queen Mary, the principal lawyers and merchants assembled socially. Douglas's tavern was consequently the headquarters of several festive clubs, among which was one largely patronized and partly originated by Mr. Smellie, called the "Crochallan Fencibles." In the designation the word "Fencibles" was introduced so as to facetiously identify the club with the Fencible regiments then being raised for defence of the country. The name *Crochallan* was a conceit of Mr. Smellie, founded on a Gaelic song, *Chro Challin*, "the cattle of Colin," sung by the jovial landlord for the delectation of his guests. One of the unwritten canons of the club was that each *novus* or candidate should at admission be subjected to a species of rough handling, in order to test his social qualities. When, in January 1787, Burns was, on Mr. Smellie's introduction, initiated as a member, he was made to encounter the usual ordeal, which, in supposed evidence of his fitness, he endured patiently. But when subsequently Mr. Smellie, as the club's "executioner," assailed the new member with his wonted irony, he found the Poet in all respects qualified to cope with him in his most caustic sallies. As the Poet and the printer were found to be adepts in social fence, the brethren of the corps delighted to enjoy their rough tilting, and so promoted and prolonged it. In allusion

to Mr. Smellie's vigorous home-thrusts, the Poet composed these impromptu lines :—

Shrewd Willie Smellie to Crochallan came ;
 The old cock'd hat, the grey surtout, the same ;
 His bristling beard just rising in its might,
 'Twas four long nights and days till shaving night ;
 His uncomb'd grizzly locks, wild staring, thatch'd
 A head for thought profound and clear unmatch'd ;
 Yet, though his caustic wit was biting rude,
 His heart was warm, benevolent, and good.

Long after he had bid adieu to Edinburgh and its socialities, the Poet remembered Mr. Smellie with a deep affection. Writing in March 1791 to Mr. Peter Hill, along with a ewe-milk cheese, which he facetiously described as a cure for dyspepsia, he counselled him on this account to invite to share it certain of their common friends. Among these he names Mr. Smellie. He proceeds :—

There, in my eye, is our friend Smellie ; a man positively of the first abilities and greatest strength of mind, as well as one of the best hearts and keenest wits that I have ever met with ; when you see him—as, alas ! he too often is, smarting at the pinch of distressful circumstances, aggravated by the sneer of contumelious greatness, a bit of my cheese alone will not cure him, but if you add a tankard of brown stout, and superadd a magnum of right Oporto, you will see his sorrows vanish like the morning mist before the summer sun.

With Mr. Smellie the Poet is known to have maintained an occasional correspondence, but the letters have, with a single exception, been lost. That exception is a letter introducing to Mr. Smellie the ingenious Mrs. Riddel of Woodley Park, in reference to his proposal to give to the world her *Sketches of the Natural History of Madeira and the Leeward Isles*. The letter is dated at Dumfries, 22nd January 1792, and concludes thus :—

I will not present you with the unmeaning "compliments of the season," but I will send you my warmest wishes and most ardent prayers that Fortune may never throw your subsistence to the mercy of a knave, or set your character on the judgment of a fool; but that, upright and erect, you may walk to an honest grave, where men of letters shall say, "Here lies a man who did honor to science," and men of worth shall say, "Here lies a man who did honor to human nature."

At Mrs. Riddel's invitation, Mr. Smellie visited her and her husband at Woodley Park in September 1792. At Dumfries he was presented with the freedom of the burgh, and at a banquet entertained by the magistrates and principal inhabitants. Mr. Smellie became the printer of Mrs. Riddel's work, and entered into a pleasant correspondence with her, which was maintained up to the period of his death.

Mr. Smellie's literary activities were unceasing. In 1784 he issued a tract, *On the Nature, Powers, and Privileges of Juries*, which was commended by Lord Erskine; he also published pamphlets in relation to local affairs. Of his great work, *The Philosophy of Natural History*, the first volume, a substantial quarto, appeared in 1790, the publisher, Mr. Charles Elliot of Edinburgh, paying for the copyright one thousand guineas. A second volume was issued posthumously.

Mr. Smellie died, after a protracted illness, on the 24th June 1795, at the age of sixty-five. An accomplished classical scholar and brilliant conversationalist, he was much cherished in literary circles. Though of a strong will and decided in his opinions, he maintained an even temper, and enjoyed the perfect confidence of his friends. With many persons eminent in science and letters he was in habits of intimacy, and he had meditated a series of memoirs commemorative of several of them. Memoirs from his pen of Lord Kames, Dr. John Gregory, David Hume, and Dr. Adam Smith,

were published posthumously. His personal memoirs, composed by Mr. Robert Kerr, F.R.S., were issued in 1811 in two octavo volumes. His portrait is included in the collection contained in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

Mr. Smellie married, in 1763, Jean, daughter of John Robertson, a native of Cromarty, and of the union were born six sons and seven daughters.

Alexander, the second son, who succeeded to his father's business, evinced strong literary tastes. He married with issue. Thomas, the third son, was author of a meritorious translation of the works of Tacitus. He died in February 1795, in his twentieth year. By his literary associate, Dr. Alexander Murray, the eminent philologist, he was commemorated in a graceful elegy, which contains these stanzas:—

Too good, too dear, with ev'ry virtue blest,
 Friend of my heart, for ever from me fled!
 O where, in yon all-hallow'd land of rest,
 Lift'st thou on high thy mild, thy honour'd head?

.

O'er thy green turf, each slow revolving year,
 I'll heave the sigh to early merit due;
 And dreary add poor friendship's sacred tear,
 For ne'er was one more hapless nor more true.

John, the fourth son, served first in the merchant service, afterwards in the Royal Navy; he latterly commanded a gun-vessel, and died at Sheerness in October 1799.

Mr. Smellie's eldest daughter married Mr. George Watson of Edinburgh, the eminent portrait-painter, by whom she had a numerous family.

JAMES SMITH.

ROBERT SMITH, a prosperous merchant in the village of Mauchline, was, about the year 1775, killed by falling from his horse. He left a widow and two children. His widow, described in the parish register as Mrs. Jean Smith, married, on the 11th March 1777, Mr. James Lamie, merchant in Mauchline;¹ of the union a son, James, was born on the 6th August 1780.²

Robert Smith's children were a son, James, and a daughter, Jean.

Jean Smith was born on the 3rd April 1767.³ Celebrated by the Poet in 1784 for her "wit," or common sense, she, ten years thereafter, became the wife of her celebrator's schoolfellow and correspondent, Mr. James Candlish.⁴

James, only son of Robert Smith, was born on the 1st March 1765,⁵ and, on his mother's second marriage, was reared under the care of his stepfather, Mr. Lamie. This gentleman cherished a fervent piety, but unhappily indulged therewith austere manners, with the result that young Smith was repelled from the domestic hearth. He removed to lodgings, and, having acquired his patrimony, he, in the Back Causeway, rented a small shop in which he conducted business as a linen-draper. In 1785 he appears as one of the Poet's principal associates. When in that year Burns established at Mauchline his Court of Equity, or Bachelors' Club, Mr. Smith was nominated one of the officers. Each officer was assigned a legal title, and Mr. Smith was nominated Procurator-Fiscal. At the Fiscal's cost the Poet perpetrated a cruel epitaph, which was not, however, intended for publicity beyond the walls of the Whitefoord Arms. When, in the spring of 1786, the Poet got into trouble in connexion

¹ Mauchline Parish Register.

⁴ See article James Candlish.

² *Ibid.*

⁵ Mauchline Parish Register.

³ *Ibid.*

with the Armour family, the "Fiscal" clung to him with a generous friendship. Writing to John Richmond at Edinburgh, on the 17th February 1786, the Poet remarks, "I am entirely happy with Smith; he is the only friend I have now in Mauchline." He acknowledged his friend's regard by making him, in the Kilmarnock edition, the subject of a commendatory "Epistle," an honour which in his turn Mr. Smith acknowledged by securing subscribers for forty copies of the Poet's volume.

Driven to extremity by the violent procedure of Mr. Armour, Burns, in a letter to Mr. Smith, informed him of his fixed determination to leave the country, and not to acknowledge Jean Armour as his wife. But, in milder strain, he concludes with these words: "If you see Jean, tell her I will meet her, so help me God."¹ Through Mr. Smith's interposition the lovers met, and then it was that the Poet gave to his beloved Jean a written acknowledgment of marriage. And when afterwards, in the exercise of an infatuated revenge, Mr. Armour persuaded his daughter to destroy the precious document which restored her to society, and renewed against his future son-in-law the cruel appliances of the law, the Poet experienced in Mr. Smith's active friendship a protection and a solace. In a letter to Mr. Smith, written from Mossgiel on the 14th of August, he informs him that his departure for the West Indies had been unexpectedly delayed. He writes:—

MY DEAR SIR,—I went to Dr. Douglas yesterday, fully resolved to take the opportunity of Captain Smith; but I found the Doctor with a Mr. and Mrs. White, both Jamaicans, and they have deranged my plans altogether. They assure him that to send me from Savannah la Mar to Port Antonio will cost my master, Charles Douglas, upwards of fifty pounds; besides running the risk of throwing myself into a pleuritic fever in consequence of hard travelling

¹ This letter by the Poet to Mr. Smith is undated; it is published in fragment by Mr. Lockhart.

in the sun. On these accounts he refuses sending me with Smith, but a vessel sails from Greenock the first of September, right for the place of my destination. The captain of her is an intimate friend of Mr. Gavin Hamilton, and as good a fellow as heart could wish; with him I am destined to go. Where I shall shelter I know not, but I hope to weather the storm. Perish the drop of blood of mine that fears them! I know their worst, and am prepared to meet it—

“I’ll laugh, an’ sing, an’ shake my leg,
As lang’s I dow.”

On Thursday morning, if you can muster as much self-denial as to be out of bed about seven o’clock, I shall see you as I ride through to Cumnock. After all, Heaven bless the sex! I feel there is still happiness for me among them—

“O woman, lovely woman! Heaven designed you
To temper man! we had been brutes without you.”

The same course of irregular wooing which induced the Poet to seriously resolve on quitting the island, led his friend Smith to remove from Mauchline. An affair cognizable by the kirk-session involved him in social trouble, and also arrested his commercial progress. A new scene was needful, and it was at once sought for. Disposing of his stock-in-trade, he proceeded from Mauchline to Linlithgowshire, and there, on the banks of the Avon, started, in partnership with one Miller, the business of calico-printing.

On his return to the west country from his first Edinburgh visit, the Poet communicated with Mr. Smith. In a letter dated Mauchline, 11th June 1787, and commencing, “My ever dear Sir,” he familiarly reports that he had waited upon old friends, including Mr. Smith’s mother, sister, and brother. After expressing his “disgust” at what he styles “the mean servile compliance of the Armour family,” he proceeds:—

I cannot settle to my mind. Farming, the only thing of which I know anything, and heaven above knows, but little do I understand of that, I cannot, dare not risk on farms as they are. If I do not fix, I will go [in] for Jamaica.

Should I stay in an unsettled state at home, I would only dissipate my little fortune, and ruin what I intend shall compensate my little ones for the stigma I have brought on their names.

The Poet's next letter to Mr. Smith, dated 30th June 1787, was written during the course of a visit to Dunbartonshire. After detailing some convivial experiences, he proceeds:—

I have yet fixed on nothing with respect to the serious business of life. I am, just as usual, a rhyming, mason-making, rattling, aimless, idle fellow. However, I shall somewhere have a farm soon. I was going to say a wife too; but that must never be my blessed lot. . . . I am afraid I have almost ruined one source, the principal one, indeed, of my former happiness—that eternal propensity I always had to fall in love. My heart no more glows with feverish raptures, I have no paradisaical evening interviews, stolen from the restless cares and prying inhabitants of this weary world.

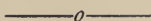
On the 25th August, that is, about two months after the date of his Dunbartonshire letter, the Poet, accompanied by Mr. William Nicol, left Edinburgh for the Northern Highlands. Halting at Linlithgow, the companions proceeded after dinner to Avon Printfield, in the hope of causing by the visit an agreeable surprise to the junior partner. But Mr. Smith was unhappily absent, a circumstance which led the Poet to make in his Journal the following entry:—"Go to my friend, Mr. Smith's, at Avon Printfield—find nobody but Mrs. Miller, an agreeable, sensible, modest, good body; as useful, but not so ornamental as Fielding's Miss Western—not rigidly polite *à la Française*, but easy, hospitable, and housewifely."

In a rambling letter, dated Mauchline, 28th April 1788, the Poet informs Mr. Smith that he had privately married Jean Armour. He adds:—

Now for business. I intend to present Mrs. Burns with a printed shawl, an article of which, I daresay, you have variety; 'tis my first present to her since I have irrevocably called her mine; and I have a kind of whimsical wish to get

the first said present from an old and valued friend of hers and mine—a trusty Trojan; whose friendship I count myself possessed of as a liferent lease.

Not improbably Mr. Smith was unable to execute his friend's commission, for the printfield concern had fallen into an entire collapse. Mr. Smith afterwards proceeded to Jamaica, and there died at an early age. Of a most generous nature, and possessing no inconsiderable acuteness, he sacrificed to social pleasures hours and opportunities, of which the more rational improvement might have conduced to fortune.



PETER STUART.

PRIOR to the middle of the eighteenth century, three enterprising brothers, natives of Scotland, migrating to London, there engaged in literary and journalistic concerns. Charles, the eldest brother, became a dramatic writer, and as such attained a measure of reputation. Peter, the second brother, started the *Evening Star*, a daily journal, set on foot consequent on the facilities afforded by the mail system established by Mr. Palmer. Mr. Peter Stuart was editor and one of the proprietors of the *Star* when Burns issued his Kilmarnock edition. Possessing himself of a copy, he had written to the Poet more than once without receiving an acknowledgment. At length, awakening to a sense of his shortcoming, Burns communicated with his admirer in these terms :—

EDINBURGH, *February 1787.*

MY DEAR SIR,—You may think, and too justly, that I am a selfish, ungrateful fellow, having received so many repeated instances of kindness from you, and yet never putting pen to paper to say, thank you; but if you knew what a devil

of a life my conscience has led me on that account, your good heart would think yourself too much avenged. By the by, there is nothing in the whole frame of man which seems to me so unaccountable as that thing called conscience. Had the troublesome yelping cur powers efficient to prevent a mischief, he might be of use; but, at the beginning of the business, his feeble efforts are to the workings of passion as the infant frosts of an autumnal morning to the unclouded fervour of the rising sun: and no sooner are the tumultuous doings of the wicked deed over, than, amidst the bitter consequences of folly, in the very vortex of our horrors, up starts conscience and harrows us with the feelings of the damned. I have enclosed you, by way of expiation, some verse and prose, that, if they merit a place in your truly entertaining miscellany, you are welcome to.

Then follows the Poet's inscription for the tombstone of Robert Fergusson, to be erected at his grave in the Canongate Churchyard, together with a copy of the minute of authority from the managers of the churchyard, authorizing him to proceed with the erection.

To Mr. Stuart, as editor of the *Evening Star*, Burns addressed his celebrated letter animadverting on his parish minister, Mr. Joseph Kirkpatrick of Dunscore, who had, on the 5th November 1788, being the day appointed for celebrating the event of the Revolution, indulged in strong invective against the memory of the Stuart kings. In this letter the Poet uses these words:—

The Stuarts only contended for prerogatives which they knew their predecessors enjoyed, and which they saw their contemporaries enjoying; but these prerogatives were inimical to the happiness of a nation, and the rights of subjects. In this contest between prince and people, the consequence of that light of science which had lately dawned over Europe, the monarch of France, for example, was victorious over the struggling liberties of his people; with us, luckily, the monarch failed, and his unwarrantable pretensions fell a sacrifice to our rights and happiness. Whether it was owing to the wisdom of leading individuals, or to the justling of parties, I cannot pretend to determine; but, likewise happily for us, the kingly power was shifted into another branch of

the family, who, as they owed the throne solely to the call of a free people, could claim nothing inconsistent with the covenanted terms which placed them there.

Maintaining his epistolary intercourse with the editor of the *Star*, the Poet seems from time to time to have communicated to him certain snatches of verse. These included his quaint and humorous sally, entitled "A New Psalm for the Chapel of Kilmarnock on the Thanksgiving Day for his Majesty's Recovery," also his "Sketch in Verse, inscribed to the Right Hon. Charles James Fox." In subsequently communicating his "Ode to Delia," he accompanied it with the following communication in prose:—

ELLISLAND, 18th May 1789.

To the Editor of the *Star*.—If the productions of a simple ploughman can merit a place in the same paper with Sylvester Otway, and the other favourites of the Muses who illuminate the *Star* with the lustre of genius, your insertion of the enclosed trifle will be succeeded by future communications from yours,
etc. R. BURNS.

The tombstone in honour of Robert Fergusson, respecting which the Poet had communicated with Mr. Stuart in 1787, was completed in the summer of 1789, and in August of that year a notice of the erection appeared in the *Scots Magazine*. Remarking that notice, Mr. Stuart again communicated with the Bard. In its curtailed form, as presented by Dr. Currie, Mr. Stuart's letter is subjoined:—

LONDON, 5th August 1789.

MY DEAR SIR,—Excuse me when I say, that the uncommon abilities which you possess must render your correspondence very acceptable to any one. I can assure you I am particularly proud of your partiality, and shall endeavour, by every method in my power, to merit a continuance of your

politeness. . . . When you can spare a few moments, I should be proud of a letter from you, directed for me, Gerard Street, Soho. . . .

I cannot express my happiness sufficiently at the instance of your attachment to my late inestimable friend, Bob Fergusson, who was particularly intimate with myself and relations. While I recollect with pleasure his extraordinary talents and many amiable qualities, it affords me the greatest consolation that I am honoured with the correspondence of his successor in natural simplicity and genius. That Mr. Burns has refined in the art of poetry must readily be admitted; but, notwithstanding many favourable representations, I am yet to learn that he inherits his convivial powers. There was such a richness of conversation, such a plenitude of fancy and attraction in him, that when I call the happy period of our intercourse to my memory, I feel myself in a state of delirium. I was then younger than he by eight or ten years, but his manner was so felicitous that he enraptured every person around him, and infused into the hearts of the young and old the spirit and animation which operated on his own mind.

Not long afterwards, probably before the end of August, the Poet replied to Mr. Stuart in these terms:—

MY DEAR SIR,—The hurry of a farmer in this particular season, and the indolence of a poet at all times and seasons, will, I hope, plead my excuse for neglecting so long to answer your obliging letter of the 5th August. That you have done well in quitting your laborious concern in * * * * I do not doubt; the weighty reasons you mention were, I hope, very, and deservedly indeed, weighty ones, and your health is a matter of the last importance; but whether the remaining proprietors of the paper have also done well, is what I much doubt. The * * * * so far as I was a reader, exhibited such a brilliancy of point, such an elegance of paragraph, and such a variety of intelligence, that I can hardly conceive it possible to continue a daily paper in the same degree of excellence: but if there was a man who had abilities equal to the task, that man's assistance the proprietors have lost.

When I received your letter I was transcribing for [the *Star*] my letter to the magistrates of the Canongate, Edinburgh, begging their permission to place a tombstone over poor Fergusson, and their edict in consequence of my petition; but now I shall send them to . . . Poor Fergusson! If there be a life beyond the grave, which I trust there is; and if there be a good God presiding over all

nature, which I am sure there is—thou art now enjoying existence in a glorious world, where worth of the heart alone is distinction in the man; where riches, deprived of all their pleasure-purchasing powers, return to their native sordid matter; where titles and honours are the disregarded reveries of an idle dream; and where that heavy virtue, which is the negative consequence of steady dulness, and those thoughtless, though often destructive follies, which are the unavoidable aberrations of poor human nature, will be thrown into equal oblivion as if they had never been! Adieu, my dear sir! So soon as your present views and schemes are concentrated in an aim, I shall be glad to hear from you; as your welfare and happiness is by no means a subject indifferent to yours,

R. B.

The abbreviations in the Poet's letter, also in that of Mr. Stuart, to which it was an answer, were obviously due to a desire on the part of the latter to conceal the fact of his differences with his co-proprietors of the *Star*.

Probably these differences were adjusted, for Mr. Stuart's next letter contained an offer to the Poet of fifty pounds a year for weekly contributions. An engagement was declined, but the Poet offered to continue his occasional verses and papers. This polite offer was duly acknowledged by Mr. Stuart, who, sending the Poet a copy of his journal, promised to continue it. Consequent on this promise, Burns addressed Mr. Stuart a rhyming epistle, expressive of obligation. That epistle is contained in the usual editions of his works.

But the delivery at Ellisland of the *Star* newspaper became irregular; hence Burns made plaint to his correspondent in the following lines:—

Dear Peter, dear Peter,
 We poor sons of metre
 Are often negleckit, ye ken;
 For instance, your sheet, man
 (Though glad I'm to see't, man),
 I get it no ae day in ten.

In 1795 Mr. Stuart purchased, for the small sum of £80, the copyright of the *Oracle*, a daily newspaper, with a circulation of 800, when he again approached the Poet with a renewal of his former offer, which was again declined. Respecting it, Mr. Stuart's younger brother Daniel, in a letter which appears in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for July 1838, remarks with a sneer that an engagement on his brother's staff "would have been a more honourable one than that of an Excise gauger." And, accepting the Poet's lines, beginning, "Dear Peter," as an intended censure, he adds: "We hear much of purse-proud insolence; but poets can sometimes be insolent in the conscious power of talent, as well as vulgar upstarts on the conscious power of purse." But Mr. Daniel Stuart was scarcely competent to give judgment in the cause. In 1796 he, conjointly with his brother Peter, acquired, for £600, the copyright and printing plant of the *Morning Post*. As managing director, he employed as leader-writers Mr. James Mackintosh, subsequently the distinguished Sir James Mackintosh, and Mr. Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Not long afterwards the latter was appointed editor, and, concentrating his powerful energies in the concern, raised the daily circulation from 350 to that of 4500, with the result that the brothers, when they parted with the property in 1803, became possessed of a fortune. But Mr. Daniel Stuart had allowed Mr. Coleridge as editor so mean a salary as sufficed to barely provide him with the necessaries of life. In an attempt to justify his act of meanness, he was involved in controversy nearly forty years afterwards.

JOHN SYME.

A CONSPICUOUS associate of the Poet at Dumfries, John Syme was descended from a family long resident in Kirkeudbrightshire. In the Sheriff Court Book of Dumfries, John Sime in Cargane, parish of Troqueer, is on the 2nd January 1580 named as "intromitter to umquhile John Sime his father."

Son of a small landowner, practising as a Writer to the Signet at Edinburgh, John Syme, the Poet's friend, was born in 1755. By his father intended for his own profession, he prosecuted legal studies, but these he abandoned in his nineteenth year, when he joined the army as an ensign. After serving a year or two in the 72nd Regiment, he retired into private life, and now electing the avocation of an agriculturist, he settled on his father's estate of Barneailzie, in Kirkeudbrightshire. But the new project did not suit, for his father, who had become involved in the affairs of the Ayr Bank, was compelled to dispose of his lands. Through family influence the subject of this notice was in 1791 appointed Distributor of Stamps at Dumfries, a lucrative office, which he continued to retain for the long period of forty years.

Mr. Syme's stamp office was situated in the Friar Vennel, now Bank Street, and when Burns removed from Ellisland to Dumfries in 1791, he rented as his dwelling-house the floor immediately over it. Between the Distributor and the Poet soon arose a strong friendship. In July 1793 Mr. Syme accompanied the Poet in an excursion to Galloway, a narrative of which he drew up soon afterwards. On the 27th July the fellow-travellers dined at the residence of the Glendonwynes of Parton, on the banks of the Dee. From thence they proceeded to Kenmure Castle, the residence of Mr. Gordon, afterwards Viscount Kenmure, where they remained three

days, while the Poet left a memorial of his visit by composing for Mrs. Gordon an epitaph on her favourite dog "Echo," which had lately died.

From Kenmure Castle the travellers journeyed to Gatehouse by a dreary road, and in a drenching rain, which resulted in the ruin of the Poet's boots, much to his discomfort and chagrin. At St. Mary's Isle they were hospitably entertained by the Earl of Selkirk, who, in token of respect and sympathy, bore the Poet's dismembered boots in his coach to Dumfries. During this excursion into Gallo-way the Poet, according to Mr. Syme, composed the first draft of his "Scots wha hae."

A man of culture and superior intelligence, Mr. Syme was honoured by the Poet as one of his chief literary counsellors. In an undated letter, ascribed to May 1795, the Poet enclosed for his approval his song beginning, "O wat ye wha's in yon town," composed as a tributary offering to the wife of Richard A. Oswald, Esq., of Auchencruive, *née* Lucy Johnston of Hilton, a lady of remarkable beauty. The Poet begins his letter to Mr. Syme with these words: "You know that among other high dignities, you have the honor to be my supreme court of critical judicature, from which there is no appeal."

At Mr. Syme's villa of Ryedale the Poet experienced much cordial hospitality. To a card inviting him to dinner, in which Mr. Syme promised him the best company and the best cookery, the Poet sent in answer the following epigram:—

No more of your guests, be they titled or not,
 And cookery the first in the nation;
 Who is proof to thy personal converse and wit
 Is proof to all other temptation.

DUMFRIES, 17th December 1795.

With respect to one of his earlier meetings with the Poet, Mr. Syme has presented the following narrative:—

In my parlour at Ryedale, one afternoon, Burns and I were very gracious and confidential. I did advise him to be temperate in all things. I might have spoken daggers, but I did not mean them. He shook to the inmost fibre of his frame, and drew the sword-cane, when I exclaimed, "What! wilt thou thus, and in my own house?" The poor fellow was so stung with remorse that he dashed himself down on the floor. That ebullition of momentary irritation was followed by a friendship more ardent than ever between us.

Mr. Syme's narrative, quoted by Sir Walter Scott in a critique of Cromeck's *Reliques* in the *Quarterly Review*, led Mr. Gilbert Burns, in the reprint of Currie's edition, which he edited in 1820, to make the following remarks:—

Great injury to the Poet's character seems to have arisen from people pretending friendship and intimacy with him, who wished to have something wonderful to tell of a person who had attracted so much of the notice of the world. It is well known that many persons are to be found whose code of moral obligation does not prevent them from violating truth in embellishing a story, and yet are esteemed by the world very honorable men. In the pictures which such men give of life and character, likeness is deliberately sacrificed to effect. Thus in the foolish story of a sword-cane, brought forward in the *Quarterly Review*, the vanity of some pretended friend of the Poet is displayed by the relation of a powerful admonition addressed by the narrator to the Poet, producing such theatrical starts and agitation as no one who knew the Poet, or who has even attentively perused his letters and poetry, can give credit to for a moment.

In relating the story of the sword-cane, it is nearly certain that Mr. Syme unconsciously misinterpreted the Poet's action, or allowed the incident to obtain in his mind a dramatic force, unwarranted by the actual circumstances.

When the Poet died Mr. Syme proceeded to institute a subscription on behalf of his family, and he accompanied Mr. Gilbert Burns to Liverpool on a visit to Dr. Currie, to aid in arranging materials for his edition of the Poet's works, and the production of a suitable memoir. Yet, from some cause which has

not been explained, his interest in the Poet's family afterwards subsided. This appears from a letter, dated 8th April 1806, in which Mr. Gilbert Burns, in relation to Mr. Cromek's intended publication of the Poet's letters, informs Mr. Robert Ainslie that "Mr. Syme had withdrawn from the share he once took in the affairs of the family."¹

Though from some variableness of nature, subsequently intensified by the strictures of Gilbert Burns in relation to the incident of the sword-cane, Mr. Syme retired from acting as a trustee in connexion with the family, he continued to cherish the Poet's memory with deep affection and regard. Having been asked to express an opinion of a portrait of the Bard, painted by Mr. Taylor, he in November 1829 wrote thus :—

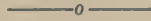
The Poet's expression varied perpetually, according to the idea that predominated in his mind, and it was beautiful to mark how well the play of his lips indicated the sentiment he was about to utter. His eyes and lips, the first remarkable for fire, and the second for flexibility, formed at all times an index to his mind, and, as sunshine or shade predominated, you might have told, *à priori*, whether the company was to be favoured with a scintillation of wit, or a sentiment of benevolence, or a burst of fiery indignation. . . . I cordially concur with what Sir Walter Scott says of the Poet's eyes. In his animated moments, and particularly when his anger was aroused by instances of tergiversation, meanness, or tyranny, they were actually like coals of living fire.

Mr. Syme died on the 24th November 1831, at the age of seventy-six; his remains were committed to the parish churchyard of Troqueer, where he and his wife are commemorated by a tombstone.

Mr. Syme married Jane Millar, who died 8th March 1809, aged forty-four. To the spouses were born several children. Their grand-daughter, Mrs. M. E. Smith of London, is known as a literary writer.

¹ Laing MSS., University of Edinburgh.

A steel-engraved portrait of Mr. Syme is contained in *The Land of Burns* (vol. ii. p. 18), accompanied by a biographical sketch from the pen of Dr. Robert Chambers.



CRAUFURD TAIT.

THE family of Tait we first trace to the parish of Longside, in Aberdeenshire, a locality associated with the ministerial labours of the Rev. John Skinner, author of "Tullochgorum." William Tait, joiner at Ludquharn, in Longside, was noted for his intelligence, and is, in the parish churchyard, commemorated by a tombstone, bearing a Latin epitaph, composed by Mr. Skinner. His son Alexander, who followed the paternal calling at Bogend, in the same parish, had a son John.

John Tait, son of Alexander Tait in Bogend of Longside, was baptized on the 11th July 1729.¹ Removing to Edinburgh, he there engaged in the study of law, and in 1763 was admitted a Writer to the Signet. About the year 1785 he purchased the estate of Harvieston, in the county of Clackmannan, where he erected a convenient residence. Having, on the introduction of his sister-in-law, Mrs. John Chalmers, formerly of Fingland,² become acquainted with Burns during the spring of 1787, he invited the Poet to visit him at Harvieston in the following autumn. Accepting the invitation, Burns, in the course of his northern tour, proceeded to Harvieston on Monday the 27th of August 1787. The visit was confined to a single day. In the morning the Poet rode from Stirling to Harvieston, a distance of nine miles, in time for

¹ Longside Parish Register.

² See article Margaret Chalmers.

breakfast, and thereafter, with the members of Mr. Tait's family, visited the Caldron Linn, and the other romantic scenery on the Devon. At Harvieston he met Mrs. Hamilton, stepmother of his friend Mr. Gavin Hamilton, and her daughter Charlotte, whom he afterwards celebrated; also Mrs. Chalmers, late of Fingland, and her elder daughter, Lady Mackenzie. In order to carry out his proposed northern tour with his friend Mr. Nicol, he on the same evening returned to Stirling. But the Poet's visit proved so acceptable to Mr. Tait and his family, that the promise of a second and longer visit before the close of the autumn was preferred and acceded to.

In fulfilment of his promise to Mr. Tait and his family, Burns left Edinburgh for Harvieston early in October, in company with his young friend Dr. James Adair. At Harvieston, where he sojourned about eight days,¹ he, in addition to those whom he had there met previously, found Miss Margaret Chalmers, whom, on his return to Edinburgh, he celebrated in his songs commencing "Where, braving angry winter's storms" and "My Peggy's face, my Peggy's form." Consequent on this visit to Harvieston, the Poet also celebrated the beautiful Charlotte Hamilton in his song "Fairest maid on Devon's banks."

John Tait of Harvieston died in the year 1800. In 1766 he married Charlotte, fourth daughter of Thomas Murdoch of Cumloden, who died prior to the year 1785, leaving a son and daughter. The daughter, Elizabeth Tait, died unmarried in 1802.

Craufurd Tait, only son of John Tait, was born in 1767, and was admitted a Writer to the Signet, conducting business in

¹ In his letter to Miss Margaret Chalmers, of the 16th September 1788, the Poet refers to this visit to Harvieston as having continued eight days; while, in his "Narrative," Dr. Adair mentions that it extended to "about

ten." But as Dr. Adair errs by describing the visit as occurring in August rather than in October, his memory may also have failed as to the period of its duration.

partnership with his father. As a younger representative of a family with whom he had pleasantly associated, he was by the Poet cherished and honoured. On the 15th October 1790 we find the Poet writing to him from Ellisland, recommending to his attention a young friend, a native of Ayrshire, who had gone to Edinburgh with the view of following the legal profession. In these words he compliments his correspondent :—

Of all the men at your time of life whom I know in Edinburgh, you are the most accessible on the side on which I have assailed you. You are very much altered indeed from what you were when I knew you, if generosity point the path you will not tread, or humanity call to you in vain.

On his father's death in the year 1800, Mr. Craufurd Tait succeeded to the estate of Harvieston, which he improved and adorned. As a lawyer he was noted for his precision and gentleness. Employed by the creditors of the Comte d'Artois, brother of the unfortunate Louis XVI., when he was residing in Holyrood House as a sanctuary from legal arrest, he induced his clients to exercise such a measure of forbearance as to enable the Prince to leave the bounds of the sanctuary, and to walk about Edinburgh without restraint.¹ He died in May 1832. Craufurd Tait married, 17th June 1795, Susan, fourth daughter of Sir Islay Campbell, Bart., of Succoth, Lord President of the Court of Session,² with issue four sons and three daughters. John, the eldest son, born 11th February 1796, was elected Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, and for thirty-six years was Sheriff of Clackmannan and Kinross, and eight years Sheriff of Perthshire. He died 22nd May 1877. Sheriff Tait married Mary, daughter of Francis Sitwell, of Barmoor, with issue. James Campbell, the second son,

¹ *Reminiscences of a Scottish Gentleman* [— Ainslie], London, 1861, 12mo, p. 61.

² Mrs. Craufurd Tait died 3rd January 1814.

born 1799, was admitted a Writer to the Signet in 1823; he died in 1878. Thomas Forsyth, third son, born 1805, was a colonel in the army, C.B., and A.D.C. to the Queen; he died unmarried.

Archibald Campbell, fourth son of Craufurd Tait, was born in Edinburgh on the 21st December 1811. After a period of attendance at the High School and the Academy of Edinburgh, he, in 1827, entered the University of Glasgow, where he specially distinguished himself in classical studies. Three years later he was elected an exhibitor on Snell's foundation to Balliol College, Oxford. Of that college he became successively scholar, fellow, and tutor, while he also graduated with first-class honours. At the age of thirty-one he was chosen, in succession to Dr. Arnold, headmaster of Rugby, and succeeded in maintaining the high reputation of the school. In 1850 he accepted the office of Dean of Carlisle, and on the 23rd November 1856 was consecrated as Bishop of London. In 1863 he initiated a movement for the erection and endowment in the metropolis of additional churches, towards which the sum of one million was afterwards contributed. Having fulfilled with an unparalleled energy his episcopal duties in the See of London, he was in November 1868 elevated to the high position of Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of all England. After a period of feeble health, he died on the 3rd December 1882, at the age of seventy-one. At the period when, as tutor at Oxford, he entered into orders, he distinguished himself as a vigorous opponent of the Tractarian movement then put forward by Drs. Newman and Pusey. And when he became a bishop he evinced a mild but firm resistance to ritualistic practices. With the view of strengthening the authority of the episcopate in repressing Romanizing tendencies, he, in 1874, succeeded in passing through Parliament the Public Worship Regulation Bill.

Along with several charges to his clergy, Archbishop Tait pub-

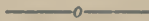
lished two volumes of *Sermons*; also works entitled *The Dangers and Safeguards of Modern Theology*, and *The Word of God and the Ground of Faith*. He contributed articles on education and kindred topics to the *Edinburgh* and *North British Reviews*.

Dr. Tait married, in 1843, Catherine, youngest daughter of the Venerable William Spooner, Archdeacon of Coventry, by his wife Anna Maria, daughter of Sir Lucius O'Brien, Bart., of Dromoland; she died 1st December 1878. Of the marriage were born a son and eight daughters.

Craufurd, the Archbishop's only son, was born at Rugby in 1849, and, being educated first at Rugby and afterwards at Eton, he entered the University of Oxford. Adopting the clerical profession, he, in 1874, commenced the pastoral labours at Saltwood, near Folkestone, and in the following year he was appointed vicar of Croydon, in Sussex. In the hope of recovering his health, which had become enfeebled, he, in 1877, made a visit to the United States, but he did not profit by the change, and died in May 1878.

Five of the Archbishop's daughters were cut off by scarlet fever in 1856. The daughters, Lucy Sydney Murray, Edith Murdoch, and Agnes Sitwell, survive.

Susan Murray, eldest daughter of Craufurd Tait, married Sir George Sitwell, Bart.; Charlotte Murdoch, second daughter, married Sir Charles Wake, Bart.; and Marion, third daughter, married Richard Wildman, Esq., of Lowndes Square, London.



JOHN TENNANT.

THE family of Tenan or Tennand, afterwards Tennant, are found in the neighbourhood of Ayr in the fifteenth century. In 1501 Andrew Tennand appears as a witness to certain charters at Ayr.

William Tennant in Brighthouse, a place situated between Alloway and Ayr, had as a relative John Tennant, miller at Blairston Mill, in the parish of Maybole, who was born in the year 1635, and died 7th April 1728. This person married Jean M'Taggart (born in 1669, died 12th February 1723), and of the marriage were born several children. Of these was William Tennant, farmer for nearly fifty years of the Mains of Bridgend of Doon, in Maybole parish, and who died on the 19th November 1744. William Tennant married Agnes Reid (she died on the 3rd December 1746), and of the union were born five sons, John, James, Robert, Alexander, and David.

Robert, the third son, engaged in business at Ayr, and was elected Deacon Convener of the Trades.

David, the youngest son, baptized 18th September 1734, received a classical education, and was preferred to the office of English master in the grammar school of Ayr. On the 14th November 1787, the town council of Ayr, in consideration of the great attention that he had bestowed on the work of the school, and the proficiency of his pupils, resolved to augment his official emoluments.¹ He died on the 27th April 1823. David Tennant married, on the 20th December 1762, Catherine, daughter of James Dalrymple, writer in Ayr, by whom he had a son, William, and two daughters, Margaret and Susan.

William Tennant married his cousin, — Dalrymple, by whom he had two children, James, afterwards Sir James Tennant, and William. Thrice married, William had eight children, but of these one only, by his second marriage with — Johnston, survived, namely, William, now of Charles Tennant & Co., London. Of the English master's two daughters, Margaret married Dr. Smith, a physician in India. Susan, the younger daughter, married Dr.

¹ Ayr Burgh Records.

Gairdner of Edinburgh; one of her children is William Tennant Gairdner, M.D., Professor of the Institutes of Medicine in the University of Glasgow.

John Tennant, eldest son and second child of William Tennant, farmer at Bridgend, was baptized 13th October 1725. In the baptismal register both his own and his father's names are spelt Tennen. John Tennant began life by renting the farm of Laigh Corton, near Bridgend. There he was the immediate neighbour of William Burnes, and when his son Robert was baptized, he became one of the witnesses. At his harvest homes he had employed the services as a violinist of Hugh M'Guire, joiner in Ayr, whose personal history has been related.¹ When Elizabeth M'Guire, the musician's eldest daughter, became Countess of Glencairn, she, in 1769, appointed the farmer at Laigh Corton factor on her lands of Ochiltree. Accepting the office, John Tennant removed to Glenconner, in the parish of Ochiltree, where he occupied the mansion, and also rented the farm of Glenconner. He retained the office of factor for eleven years.

When Burns was on the eve of publishing his poems, he carried his MSS. to Glenconner, and read them with such intensity of feeling that Mr. Tennant was thrilled with emotion. To the Poet's dramatic power as a reader he and his elder sons were afterwards in the habit of referring. When the Kilmarnock volume appeared, "Glenconner" brought it under the notice of the widowed Countess of Glencairn, also of Mr. Dalziel, the Earl of Glencairn's factor at Finlayston, with the result that the Earl made the Poet known to Mr. Creech, and also essentially aided in introducing him into the literary society of Edinburgh. Grateful to Mr. Tennant for his important services, Burns denoted his obligation by presenting him with a favourite work, entitled, *Letters concerning the Religion essential*

¹ See article Earl of Glencairn.

to *Man as it is distinct from what is merely an accession to it*, and on which he inscribed these words, "A paltry present from Robert Burns, the Scotch Bard, to his own friend and his father's friend, John Tennant in Glenconner, 20th December 1786."¹

At the Poet's request, Mr. Tennant accompanied him to Dumfriesshire, in February 1788, to inspect the farms of Mr. Miller of Dalswinton, and at his advice he selected Ellisland. On this subject the Poet, on the 7th of March, communicated with his friend Robert Muir in these terms:—

I took old Glenconner with me to Mr. Miller's farm, and he was so pleased with it, that I have made an offer to Mr. Miller, which, if he accepts, shall make me sit down as a plain farmer—the happiest of lives when a man can live by it.

In his rhyming "Epistle to James Tennant," Glenconner's eldest son, composed in 1786, the Poet writes:—

My heart-warm love to guid auld Glen,
 The ace an' wale of honest men :
 When bending down wi' auld grey hairs
 Beneath the load of years and cares,
 May He who made him still support him,
 An' views beyond the grave comfort him ;
 His worthy fam'ly far and near,
 God bless them a' wi' grace and gear.

John Tennant died on the 28th April 1810, at the advanced age of eighty-four. He was twice married. He married, first, 22nd December 1748, Jane, daughter of James M'Clure of the parish of St. Quivox, with issue two sons, William and James, also a daughter, Joan. James alone survived. Born at Laigh Corton on the 5th

¹ The volume is now in the possession of Sir Charles Tennant, Bart., of Glen, Glenconner's great-grandson.

May 1754, he became miller at Ochiltree Mill, and was familiarly known as "the miller." In his poetical "Epistle to James Tennant" the Poet celebrates the different members of the family, and expresses a hope that in the enjoyment of life his friend may have—

Mony a laugh, and mony a drink,
And aye enough o' needfu' clink.

By a neighbour at Ochiltree James Tennant was described in 1812 as "a dungeon of wit." He married, in May 1793, Jean M'Clatchie, with issue three sons—John, born 1796, William, born 1797, and James, born 1799; also a daughter, Charlotte, born in 1795. John and Charlotte left descendants.

John Tennant, factor at Glenconner, married, secondly, 23rd August 1757, Mary, daughter of John M'Lure, formerly farmer in Netherton of Alloway (born 24th October 1738, died 3rd March 1784), and of the marriage were born six sons and seven daughters.

Agnes, the eldest daughter, born 30th April 1764, is, in the Poet's epistle to her brother James, alluded to as—

my auld acquaintance, Nancy,
Since she is fitted to her fancy,
An' her kind stars hac airted till her
A guid chiel wi' a pickle siller.

Agnes had, in 1785, married George Reid, farmer at Barquharie, nephew of the Rev. George Reid, minister of Ochiltree, who, at the time of his death in 1786, was Father of the Church, being in the sixty-first year of his ministry. On a pony supplied in loan by Nancy's husband the Poet rode to Edinburgh in 1786, and he acknowledged the act of service by addressing to Mr. Reid the first letter which he despatched from the capital. To Mrs. Reid, in token of gratitude, he sent an early copy of the Edinburgh edition of his poems.

Mrs. Reid died on the 14th June 1787, leaving two daughters, Margaret, who married — Prentice, and Elizabeth, who married — Miller.

Janet, second daughter of John Tennant and Mary M'Clure, born 30th May 1766, married Andrew Paterson of Ayr, with issue; she died on the 1st February 1843.

Margaret, third daughter, born 22nd April 1770, died unmarried on the 19th October 1836.

Elizabeth, fourth daughter, born 11th June 1776, married — Houghton, of Cape Town, with issue; she died 28th February 1813.

Katherine, fifth daughter, was born 24th July 1778; she died unmarried on the 24th January 1848.

Sarah, sixth daughter, born 18th April 1780, married William Sloan, farmer, Auchlin, in the parish of Ochiltree, and had eight children; she died 5th September 1864.

Charlotte, seventh daughter, born 14th September 1782, resided at Leddrie Green, in the parish of Strathblane, where she died unmarried on the 4th December 1859.

William, eldest son of John Tennant of Glenconner by his second wife, was born on the 1st November 1758. In the Poet's rhyming epistle to his brother James, William is described as—

My anld schoolfellow, preacher Willie.

William Tennant was chaplain to the forces in India, and on his retirement settled at Glenconner. Of earnest religious convictions, his pulpit prelections were strictly evangelical. In 1803 he published *Indian Researches*, in two volumes, and in 1807 issued *Thoughts on the Effects of the British Government on the State of India*. From the University of Glasgow he received the degree of LL.D. He died, unmarried, on the 13th May 1813.¹

¹ A memoir of Dr, William Tennant is contained in *Public Characters*, for the year 1805, p. 393.

John, second son of the factor at Glenconner by his second marriage, was born 28th August 1760. Boarded along with the Poet with Mr. John Murdoch, English master in Ayr Academy,¹ they occupied the same apartment, and John was disposed to complain that his bedfellow would keep him awake for hours repeating verses which he had composed. The Poet was then in his seventeenth year.

John Tennant first turned his attention to ship-building, but, finding that a seven years' apprenticeship was necessary, he abandoned the notion, and entered on business as a distiller. Writing to him from Ellisland, on the 22nd December 1788, the Poet begins:—

MY DEAR SIR,—I yesterday tried my cask of whisky for the first time, and I assure you it does you great credit. . . . The whisky of this country is a most rascally liquor, and by consequence only drunk by the most rascally part of the inhabitants. I am persuaded, if you once get a footing here, you might do a great deal of business in the way of consumpt; and should you commence distiller again, this is the native barley country.

The Poet concludes:—

If you could take a jaunt this way yourself, I have a spare spoon, knife, and fork very much at your service. My compliments to Mrs. Tennant, and all the good folks in Glenconner and Barquharie.

Abandoning business as a distiller, John Tennant leased the farms of Auchenbay and Steelepark, afterwards the farm of Shields in the parish of St. Quivox. Latterly he rented Girvan Mains, and many other small farms in the same neighbourhood. A skilful agriculturist, he was consulted by Sir John Sinclair, and was examined by a Committee of the House of Commons in reference to the state of agriculture in Scotland. From a single year's profits

¹ Mr. Murdoch's house is now a ruinous tenement on the west side of Sandgate, immediately to the north of the Free Church.

of his farms he purchased the estate of Creoch, in the parish of Ochiltree, for the sum of £9000. He died in 1853.

John Tennant of Creoch married, in 1785, Margaret Colville (she died 26th May 1823), and of the union were born four sons and eight daughters.

Jane, the eldest daughter, was born on the 15th May 1786. In his poetical "Epistle to James Tennant," the Poet, in anticipation of the birth of Auchenbay's first child, writes thus:—

And Auchenbay, I wish him joy,
If he's a parent, lass or boy,
May he be *dad*, and Meg the *mither*,
Just five-and-forty years thegither.¹

Jane died unmarried, as did Margaret, a twin, born 2nd January 1788, Agnes, born 25th October 1789, and Elizabeth, born 15th October 1791. The daughters, Jessy, born 2nd January 1788, Catherine, born 12th August 1797, and Charlotte, born 15th May 1804, severally married, with issue. Isabella, the sixth daughter, born 17th May 1793, married John Guthrie, Turnberry Lodge, Kirkoswald, formerly captain in the Royal East Middlesex Militia; she died at Glasgow on the 15th June 1878.²

Auchenbay's four sons were John, George, born 28th April 1799, William, born 17th February 1802, and David, born 4th October 1807. John, the eldest son, born 25th March 1795, succeeded his father in the estate of Creoch, and died 17th May 1863. By his second wife, Anne, sixth child of John Tennant of the Stamp Office,

¹ The date of the birth of John Tennant's first-born approximately fixes the date of the Poet's rhyming epistle to his brother James; it has hitherto been erroneously ascribed to the year 1789. In wishing his old companion "five-and-forty years" of connubial happiness, the Poet remembered that his friend had married at five-and-twenty; he therefore wishes

him to attain the threescore and ten years of the Psalmist. He survived to the age of ninety-four.

² To Mrs. Guthrie's grandson, Dr. David Murray, solicitor, Glasgow, we are largely indebted for assistance in the matter of the Tennant pedigree.

Ayr, and third son of Robert Tennant, Deacon Convener of the Trades of Ayr, brother of "old Glenconner," he had a family of sons. George, the eldest son, succeeded to the estate.

David, third son of Glenconner by his second wife, was born 6th June 1762. Joining as a seaman the merchant service, he obtained command of a vessel, and was engaged in privateering during the French wars. In the epistle, Burns refers to "The manly tar, my mason-billie." David Tennant lost his right hand in a naval engagement, and, having distinguished himself by his valour, was offered knighthood, which he declined. He married Ann Green, without issue, and died at Swansea on the 30th August 1839.

Charles, Glenconner's fourth son by his second wife, was born 3rd May 1768. He was sent by his father to Kilbarchan to acquire the art of handloom weaving; he is in the Poet's epistle styled "wabster Charlie." He afterwards adopted the trade of bleaching, which he conducted at Darnley, near Barrhead. In connexion with the art of bleaching, he in 1797 obtained a patent for the manufacture of chloride of lime, by what is known as the humid process, and two years later got a further patent for the dry process, that is, bleaching powder. Thereafter a copartnership was formed for working the inventions under the firm of Tennant, Knox, & Co., the partners of which were Charles Tennant, James Knox of Hurlet, Charles Mackintosh of Dunchattan, Dr. William Couper, surgeon, Glasgow, and Mr. Alexander Dunlop. By these partners were constructed the great works at St. Rollox, Glasgow. Charles Tennant died on the 1st October 1838. He married in 1795 Margaret Wilson, daughter of William Wilson of Thornley, with issue two sons and six daughters.

Of the daughters, Charlotte married Dr. John Couper, Mary, William Couper, and Christina, Alexander Couper, sons of William

Couper, physician in Glasgow, a partner in the St. Rollox firm; Margaret married — Dunlop; Catherine, Robert Wallace; Elizabeth remained unmarried.

Charles James, the younger son, became proprietor of Ballikinrain.

John, the elder son, succeeded his father as a principal partner in the St. Rollox works. Possessed of much energy and intelligence, he evinced a deep interest in the municipal affairs of Glasgow, where he was long resident. He died on the 17th April 1878.¹ His family consisted of two sons and a daughter.

Charles, the elder son, was born in 1823. In 1852 he purchased the estate of Glen, in the county of Peebles, on which he erected an elegant residence. In 1880 he was elected Parliamentary representative for the counties of Peebles and Selkirk. On the 17th July 1885 he was created a baronet. He married, in 1849, Emma, daughter of Richard Winsloe of Mount Nebo, Taunton, Somersetshire, and has issue.

John, the younger son, married with issue.

Marion, only daughter of John Tennant of St. Rollox, married, 5th April 1852, the Rev. Robert Wallace, minister of Dalrymple, Ayrshire.

Alexander, fifth son of Glenconner by his second wife, was born 23rd May 1772. In early life he established his residence at the Cape of Good Hope, where he died on the 15th May 1814. He had a daughter, Anne Elizabeth, also five sons, John, Alexander William, Charles, William, and Hercules.

Hercules Tennant became Civil Commissioner of Uitenhage. He married, as his first wife, Letitia Brand, and his eldest son is Sir David Tennant, present Speaker of the House of Representatives in Cape Colony.

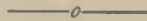
Robert, Glenconner's sixth and youngest son by his second

¹ See *A Hundred Glasgow Men*: Maclehose, Glasgow.

marriage, was born 31st August 1774. He is the "singing Sannock" of the epistle. He settled as a bleacher at Fintona in Ireland, where he died on the 11th August 1841. Twice married, he had six children by his first wife, and by his second one child. Alexander, his eldest son, is a cotton broker in Glasgow, and his daughter, Mary, resides at 10 Glasgow Street, Hillhead, Glasgow.

John Tennant, styled "of Glenconner," married, thirdly, on the 15th January 1787, Jean MacWilliam, of the parish of Dalmellington, widow of Thomas Reid; she died 28th January 1798, without issue.

"Cousin Kate" of the epistle was Katherine, daughter of Alexander Tennant, a younger brother of Glenconner; she latterly resided at Ayr, where she died at an advanced age.



GEORGE THOMSON.

SON of Mr. Robert Thomson, some time schoolmaster at Limekilns, in the parish of Dunfermline, George Thomson was there born on the 4th March 1757. In the parish register of Dunfermline his birth and baptism are denoted in the following entry:—

1757.—Mr. Robert Thomson, schoolmaster in Limekilns, had a son born to him of Anne Stirling, his wife, March 4th, and baptized 6th, named *George*. Witnesses, Rolland Cowie, wigmaker in Dunfermline, and Mr. Andrew Reeky, preceptor to the children of Mr. Robert Wellwood of Easter Gellet, advocate.

In an autobiographical letter, dated 29th March 1838, addressed by Mr. Thomson to Dr. Robert Chambers, when that gentleman was preparing the letterpress of *The Land of Burns*, he mentions that during his childhood his father removed to Banff, where he con-

tinued to exercise the function of a public instructor. At length, finding that his emoluments as an unendowed teacher were insufficient for the maintenance of his family, he about the year 1774 removed to Edinburgh, where he accepted employment as a messenger-at-arms.

George had acquired a fair amount of education at the grammar school of Banff, and, on his father settling at Edinburgh, was found competent for the duties of clerk to a Writer to the Signet. In 1780, on the recommendation of Mr. John Home, the author of "Douglas," he was appointed junior clerk to the Board of Trustees, and not long afterwards, on the death of the principal clerk, he succeeded to his office, a respectable position, which he retained till the period of his death. From Mr. Thomson's autobiographical letter we now make a long extract:—

From my boyhood I had a passion for the sister arts of Music and Painting, which I have ever since continued to cherish in the society of the ablest professors of both arts. Having studied the violin, it was my custom, after the hours of business, to con over our Scottish melodies, and to devour the choruses of Handel's oratorios, in which, when performed at St. Cecilia's Hall, I generally took a part, along with a few other gentlemen, Mr. Alexander Wight, one of the most eminent counsel at the bar, Mr. Gilbert Innes of Stow, Mr. John Russell, W.S., Mr. John Hutton, etc., it being then not uncommon for grave amateurs to assist at the St. Cecilia concerts, one of the most interesting and liberal musical institutions that ever existed in Scotland or indeed in any country. I had so much delight in singing those matchless choruses and in practising the violin quartetts of Pleyel and Haydn, that it was with joy I hailed the hour when, like the young amateur in the good old Scotch song, I could hie me "hame to my Cremona," and enjoy Haydn's admirable fancies.

"I still was pleased where'er I went, and when I was alone,
I screw'd my pegs and pleas'd myself with John o' Badenyon."

At the St. Cecilia concerts I heard Scottish songs sung in a style of excellence far surpassing any idea which I had previously had of their beauty, and that

too from *Italians*, Signor Tenducci the one, and Signora Domenica Corri the other. Tenducci's "I'll never leave thee" and "Braes of Ballenden," and the Signora's "Ewe-bughts, Marion," and "Waly, waly," so delighted every hearer, that in the most crowded room not a whisper was to be heard, so entirely did they rivet the attention and admiration of the audience. Tenducci's singing was full of passion, feeling, and taste; and, what we hear very rarely from singers, his articulation of the words was no less perfect than his expression of the music. It was in consequence of my hearing him and Signora Corri sing a number of our songs so charmingly, that I conceived the idea of collecting all our best melodies and songs, and of obtaining accompaniments to them worthy of their merit.

On examining with great attention the various collections on which I could by any means lay my hands, I found them all more or less exceptionable, a sad mixture of good and evil, the pure and the impure. The melodies in general were without any symphonies to introduce and conclude them, and the accompaniments (for the piano only) meagre and commonplace; while the verses united with the melodies were in a great many instances coarse and vulgar, the productions of a rude age, and such as could not be tolerated or sung in good society.

Many copies of the same melody both in print and manuscript, differing more or less from each other, came under my view; and after a minute comparison of copies, and hearing them sung over and over by such of my fair friends as I knew to be most conversant with them, I chose that set or copy of each air which I found the most simple and beautiful.

For obtaining accompaniments to the airs, and also symphonies to introduce and conclude each air,—a most interesting appendage to the airs that had not before graced any of the collections,—I turned my eyes first on Pleyel, whose compositions were remarkably popular and pleasing; and afterwards, when I had resolved to extend my work into a complete collection of all the airs that were worthy of preservation, I divided them in different portions, and sent them from time to time to Haydn, to Beethoven, to Weber, Hummel, etc., the greatest musicians then flourishing in Europe. These artistes, to my inexpressible satisfaction, proceeded *con amore* with their respective portions of the work; and in the symphonies, *which are original and characteristic creations of their own*, as well as in their judicious and delicate accompaniments for the pianoforte, and for the violin, flute, and violoncello, they exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and obtained the decided approval of the best judges.

Their compositions have been pronounced by the *Edinburgh Review* to be wholly unrivalled for originality and beauty.

The poetry became next the subject of my anxious consideration, and engaged me in a far more extensive correspondence than I had ever anticipated, which occupied nearly the whole of my leisure for many years; for, although a small portion of the melodies had long been united with excellent songs, yet a much greater number stood matched with such unworthy associates as to render a divorce and a new union absolutely necessary.

In the progress of his correspondence, Mr. Thomson sought assistance from the Poet. In his first letter to him, which is dated September 1792, he, after explaining the character of his proposed work, writes thus:—

We shall esteem your poetical assistance a particular favour, besides paying any reasonable price you shall please to demand for it. Profit is quite a secondary consideration with us, and we are resolved to spare neither pains nor expense on the publication. Tell me frankly, then, whether you will devote your leisure to writing twenty or twenty-five songs suitable to the particular melodies which I am prepared to send you. A few songs, exceptionable only in some of their verses, I will likewise submit to your consideration; leaving it to you either to mend these or make new songs in their stead. It is superfluous to assure you that I have no intention to displace any of the sterling old songs: those only will be removed which appear quite silly or absolutely indecent. Even these shall all be examined by Mr. Burns, and if *he* is of opinion that any of them are deserving of the music, in such cases no divorce shall take place.

To Mr. Thomson's request the Poet acceded with enthusiastic ardour. In a letter, dated Dumfries, 16th September, he informs Mr. Thomson that compliance with his wish would "positively add to his enjoyments," and that he was willing to enter at once upon the undertaking. He concludes:—

As to remuneration, you may think my songs either *above* or *below* price; for they shall absolutely be the one or the other. In the honest enthusiasm with which I embark in your undertaking, to talk of money, wages, fee, hire, etc., would be downright prostitution of soul.

The correspondence so begun between Mr. Thomson and the Poet was stately continued till within a few days of the death of the latter. That correspondence is included in the usual editions of the Poet's works; it relates chiefly to the subject of their common labours in the revision and purification of the national minstrelsy. As the Poet strongly insisted on fulfilling his part without remuneration, Mr. Thomson was naturally reluctant to press upon him the acceptance of any pecuniary acknowledgment; but having ventured, on the 1st of July 1793, to send him the sum of five pounds, he communicated with him in these words:—

As I shall be benefited by the publication, you must suffer me to enclose a small mark of my gratitude, and to repeat it afterwards when I find it convenient. Do not return it, for, by Heaven! if you do, our correspondence is at an end; and though this should be no loss to you, it would mar the publication, which, under your auspices, cannot fail to be respectable and interesting.

In reference to Mr. Thomson's gift the Poet wrote thus:—

I assure you, my dear sir, that you truly hurt me with your pecuniary parcel. It degrades me in my own eyes. However, to return it would savour of bombast affectation; but, as to any more traffic of that debtor and creditor kind, I swear by that HONOR which crowns the upright statue of ROBERT BURNS'S INTEGRITY, on the least motion of it, I will indignantly spurn the by-past transaction, and from that moment commence entire stranger to you! Burns's character for generosity of sentiment and independence of mind will, I trust, long outlive any of his wants which the cold, unfeeling ore can supply; at least, I shall take care that such a character he shall deserve.

In February 1796 Mr. Thomson presented Mrs. Burns with a Paisley shawl, the bestowal of which the Poet gracefully acknowledged; and when, just nine days before his death, the Bard dreaded incarceration for a small debt at the hands of a draper in Dumfries,

he begged Mr. Thomson for five pounds as an advance on literary service. Mr. Thomson promptly sent the money; but, as his entire pecuniary contribution to his eminent coadjutor only amounted to a total of ten pounds, he was afterwards, on that account, subjected to attack. The imputation that he had acted penuriously was certainly unjust, inasmuch as the Poet had stoutly resented the offer of recompense. But long after the time when he had been unjustly aspersed, and the effect of the hostile criticism had all but subsided, Mr. Thomson, in his letter to Dr. Robert Chambers, refers to the subject thus:—

Had I been a selfish or avaricious man, I had a fair opportunity, upon the death of the Poet, to put money in my pocket; for I might then have published for my own behoof all the beautiful lyrics he had written for me, the original manuscripts of which were in my possession. But instead of doing this, I was no sooner informed that the friends of the Poet's family had come to a resolution to collect his works, and to publish them for the benefit of the family, and that they thought it of importance to include my MSS. as being likely, from their number, their novelty, and beauty, to prove an attraction to subscribers, than I felt it my duty to put them at once in possession of all the songs and of the correspondence between the Poet and myself: and accordingly, through Mr. John Syme of Ryedale, I transmitted the whole to Dr. Currie, who had been prevailed on, immensely for the advantage of Mrs. Burns and her children, to take on himself the task of editor. For thus surrendering the manuscripts, I received, both verbally and in writing, the warm thanks of the trustees for the family, Mr. John Syme and Mr. Gilbert Burns, who considered what I had done as a fair return for the Poet's generosity of conduct to me.

If anything more [adds Mr. Thomson] were wanting to set me right with respect to the anonymous calumnies circulated to my prejudice, in regard to the Poet, I have it in my power to refer to a most respectable testimonial, which, to my very agreeable surprise, was sent me by Professor Josiah Walker, one of the Poet's biographers; and had I not been reluctant to obtrude myself on the public, I should long since have given it publicity. The Professor wrote me as follows:—

“PERTH, 14th April 1811.

“DEAR SIR,—Before I left Edinburgh I sent a copy of my account of Burns to Lord Woodhouselee; and since my return I have had a letter from his Lordship, which, among other passages, contains one that I cannot withhold from you. He writes thus:—‘I am glad that you have embraced the occasion which lay in your way of doing full justice to Mr. George Thomson, who, I agree with you in thinking, was most harshly and illiberally treated by an anonymous dull calumniator. I have always regarded Mr. Thomson as a man of great worth and most respectable character; and I have every reason to believe that poor Burns felt himself as much indebted to his good counsels and active friendship as a man, as the public is sensible he was to his good taste and judgment as a critic.’”

Of the unbiassed opinion of such a highly respectable gentleman and accomplished scholar as Lord Woodhouselee, I certainly feel not a little proud: it is of itself more than sufficient to silence the calumnies by which I have been assailed, first anonymously, and afterwards, to my great surprise, by some writers who might have been expected to possess sufficient judgment to see the matter in its true light.

The first half volume of Mr. Thomson’s work was published in folio in 1793, under the title of *Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice, with Symphonies and Accompaniments for the Pianoforte, Violin, etc., by Pleyel, Kozeluch, Haydn, and Beethoven*. In the second half volume, which appeared in August 1798, was presented the following certificate by the Poet, which, undated, has been assigned to the 18th of May 1796:—

I do hereby certify and declare, That ALL the Songs of my writing, published and to be published by Mr. George Thomson of Edinburgh, are so published by my authority. And, moreover, that I never empowered any other person whatever to publish any of the Songs written by me for his Work. And I authorize him to prosecute, in his own name, any person or persons who shall publish any of those Songs without his consent. In testimony whereof, etc.

ROBERT BURNS.

Volume II. of Mr. Thomson's work was issued in July 1799, and, as it contained twenty-eight lyrics by the Poet, Mr. Thomson presented a copy to Mr. Gilbert Burns, who acknowledged the gift in these words :—

If ever I come to Edinburgh, I will certainly avail myself of your invitation to call on a person whose handsome conduct to my brother's family has secured my esteem, and confirmed to me the opinion that musical taste and talents have a close connexion with the harmony of the moral feelings.

Mr. Thomson's collection extended to five folio volumes, of which the third appeared in December 1801, the fourth in 1805, and the fifth and last in 1818. In 1822 he began to reproduce his work in octavo; it was completed in May 1825 in six volumes.

Besides his great work on Scottish Song, Mr. Thomson issued anonymously in 1807 a volume entitled, *Statement and Review of a Recent Decision of the Judge of Police in Edinburgh, authorizing his Officers to make Domiciliary Visits in Private to stop Dancing, etc.*, by Civis. In 1809 he produced, in folio, a *Select Collection of Original Welsh Airs adapted for the Voice, united to Characteristic English Poetry.*

On the 3rd March 1847, a few days before he had completed his ninetieth year, Mr. Thomson was publicly presented with an elegant silver vase, the contribution of one hundred gentlemen in Edinburgh as a token of their esteem. On that occasion Lord Cockburn, who presided, spoke thus :—

It is pleasant to admire a man for his public services; it is pleasant to pay a tribute to his understanding; but it is far more gratifying to the heart to say that you love him for his virtues. . . . As to the imputations on Mr. Thomson in connexion with the history of Burns, I have long ago studied the matter with as much candour as any man could apply to a subject in which he had no personal interest, and my clear conviction is, not only that all those imputations are groundless, but that, if Mr. Thomson were now placed in the same situation in which he was then, nothing different or better could be done.

In 1848 Mr. Thomson was induced by some members of his family to change his residence from Edinburgh to London; but, after remaining in the metropolis only a few months, he finally returned to Scotland. He died at Leith on the 18th February 1851, at the advanced age of ninety-four. His remains were deposited in Kensal Green Cemetery, London, where, by the members of his family, he has been suitably commemorated.

Mr. Thomson married, in 1784, Katherine Miller, daughter of a lieutenant in the 50th Regiment, and of the union were born two sons and five daughters.

Robert, the elder son, entered the army, and attained rank as lieutenant-colonel of Engineers. He married Harriet, daughter of — Latham, banker in Dover, by whom he had three sons and several daughters. George, the eldest son, a colonel in the army, died in 1886. Alfred, the second son, emigrated to Australia, where he realized a fortune. Frederick, the youngest son, is a clergyman of the Church of England. Harriet, the eldest daughter, married General Hallifax; she is now a widow.

William, the younger son, joined the civil department of the army, and became Assistant - Commissary - General. He married Barbara Sinclair, who, on the death of her only brother, succeeded to the valuable estate of Freswick, in Caithness. The only child of the marriage, William Thomson Sinclair, Esq., of Freswick, resides at Dunbeath Castle, Caithness.

Of Mr. George Thomson's five daughters, Katherine, the eldest, married Robert Stark, architect, with issue a daughter, Katherine, who died unmarried.

Margaret, second daughter, died unmarried, at a very advanced age. Anne, third daughter, married Dr. William Fisher; she died at an advanced age without issue.

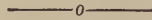
Georgina, fourth daughter, married, 1st June 1814, George

Hogarth, Esq., W.S.,¹ and died in 1864. Of the marriage were born five sons and five daughters. Robert, the eldest son, settled in Jamaica, where he died in 1843. George, second son, died in India in 1841. William Thomson, third son, is resident in London. James Ballantyne, fourth son, died in Australia in 1872. Edward, fifth son, died in 1878.

Catherine Thomson, the eldest daughter of George Hogarth and Georgina Thomson, married, in 1836, the celebrated Charles Dickens, and became the mother of his children ; she died in November 1879. Mary Scott, second daughter, and first of the name, died in infancy. Mary Scott, third daughter, second of the name, born in 1820, died in 1837. Georgina, fourth daughter, resides in London. Helen Isabella, fifth daughter, married Richard Roney, with issue a daughter.

Helen, youngest daughter of George Thomson, died unmarried, at an advanced age.

Keith Thomson, uterine brother of Mr. George Thomson, was a teacher of music, and in that capacity was employed by the magistrates of Inverness. He died at Inverness in November 1855, at the age of eighty-three.



MARGARET THOMSON.

WHEN in Hugh Roger's cottage in Kirkoswald village, prosecuting his mathematical studies in the summer of 1776, Burns remarked from the window, in her father's garden, fifty yards off, the charming

¹ Mr. Hogarth abandoned legal pursuits in 1831, and, after editing newspapers at Exeter and Halifax, joined, in 1835, the staff of the

Morning Chronicle. He published a *History of Music*, and other works.

figure of Peggy Thomson, then in her seventeenth year.¹ In his autobiographical letter to Dr. Moore, the Poet writes :—

I spent my seventeenth summer a good distance from home, at a noted school on the smuggling coast, to learn mensuration, surveying, dialling, etc., in which I made a pretty good progress. . . . I went on with a high hand in my geometry, till the sun entered Virgo,² a month which is always a carnival in my bosom. A charming *fillette*, who lived next door to the school, overtook my trigonometry, and set me off in a tangent from the spheres of my studies. I struggled on with my sines and co-sines for a few days more ; but, stepping out to the garden one charming noon to take the sun's altitude, I met with my angel—

Like Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower—

It was in vain to think of doing any more good at school. The remaining week I stayed I did nothing but craze the faculties of my soul about her, or steal out to meet with her ; and the two last nights of my stay in the country, had sleep been a mortal sin, I was innocent.

In Peggy's honour Burns composed his song beginning " Now, westlin' winds and slaught'ring guns ; " but his attachment to the object of his early passion was evanescent, since, on being informed, several years after his first meeting her, that she was about to be married, he received the announcement with complacency. In a letter to Thomas Orr, dated 11th November 1784, he writes, in allusion to an untoward event which had occurred in his private history, " I am very glad Peggy is off my hand." Peggy became the wife of one of the Poet's old friends, William Neilson, farmer at Minnybee, in Kirkoswald parish. The marriage was solemnized at Kirkoswald on the 23rd November 1784.³

¹ Peggy's father, Robert Thomson, was a joiner, much employed by the noble family at Culzean.

² 23rd August.

³ Kirkoswald Parish Register. In the Library edition of Burns's Works, Edinburgh, 1877-79 (vol. iv. 144), Peggy's husband is, by the editor, described as John Neilson.

In August 1786 the Poet paid a visit to Carrick, with the twofold purpose of obtaining payment of subscription copies of his poems, and of bidding adieu to old acquaintances in the prospect of his voyage to Jamaica. Among those visited by him were William and Mrs. Neilson at Minnybee. To Mrs. Neilson he presented a copy of his poems inscribed with these lines :—

Once fondly lov'd, and still remember'd dear,
 Sweet early object of my youthful vows,
 Accept this mark of friendship, warm, sincere,—
 Friendship! 'tis all cold duty now allows.

And when you read the simple artless rhymes,
 One friendly sigh for him—he asks no more,
 Who, distant, burns in flaming torrid climes,
 Or haply lies beneath th' Atlantic roar.

To a copy of these verses, carefully engrossed in the Glenriddel volume of MS. poems, the Poet has appended these remarks :—

Written on the blank leaf of a copy of the first edition of my Poems, which I presented to an old sweetheart, then married. 'Twas the girl I mentioned in my letter to Dr. Moore, where I speak of taking the sun's altitude. Poor Peggy! Her husband is my old acquaintance, and a most worthy fellow. When I was taking leave of my Carrick relations, intending to go to the West Indies, when I took farewell of her, neither she nor I could speak a syllable. Her husband escorted me three miles on my road, and we both parted with tears.

Margaret Thomson survived her husband, and settled in Kirkoswald village, where she kept a small shop. She had a son, John, who engaged in weaving at Kirkoswald; also two daughters, who latterly resided in Ayr. All died unmarried.

GAVIN TURNBULL.

THOMAS TURNBULL, a native of Roxburghshire, settled in Kilmarnock, where, about the year 1770, he was employed as a dyer in a factory of the place. Familiarly known as "Tammy Trumble," he was frequently of an evening to be found in a small tavern, rejoicing his companions by his sprightly talk, or delighting them by his melody. Unhappily he carried with him to the taproom his son Gavin, who, when his own circumstances were somewhat affluent, he had intended to educate for the Church.

By his father Gavin Turnbull was entered in a carpet manufactory at Kilmarnock, but after a time he contracted desultory habits, and became indigent. He now took shelter in a small and uncomfortable attic, of which one to whom his circumstances were known has given the following description:—

He resided alone in a small garret in which there was no furniture. The bed on which he lay was entirely composed of straw, with the exception of an old patched covering, which he threw over him during the night. He had no chair to sit upon. A cold stone placed by the fire served him as such; and the sole of a small window at one end of the room was all he had for a table, from which to take his food, or on which to write his verses. A tin kettle and a spoon were all his cooking utensils; and when he prepared a meal for himself, he used the lid of the kettle instead of a bowl! Perhaps no poet, either major or minor, ancient or modern, ever existed in so wretched a condition.¹

Even in circumstances so untoward Gavin Turnbull could vivaciously invoke the Muse. From his wretched garret he addressed an ode to David Sillar, in the same style of versifying

¹ *Contemporaries of Burns* [by James Paterson], Edinb. 1840, p. 93.

as that in which, in the first "Epistle to Davie," he had been addressed by Burns. The following is a specimen :—

In a wee housie, warm and snug,
I sit beside the chimla lug
And spin awa' my rhyme.

Then heed na, Davie, though we be
A race exposed to misery,
A' mankind hae their share ;
Yet wi' the few whase hearts are fired
Wi' love o' sang, by Him inspired,
What mortals can compare ?
How sweet when in the feeling heart
Alternate passions glow ;
The mix'd ideas to impart,
To paint our joy and woe !
Desire doth conspire
Wi' love to form the sang,
While pleasing and easing
The numbers glide along.

The sweets o' nature a' are ours,
The verdant fields, the blooming flowers,
The woodland and the plain :
To us the bonnie months of spring
Delights and soft sensations bring
The vulgar ne'er attain.

About the year 1787, Gavin, accompanied by all the members of his father's family, left Kilmarnock for Glasgow, and there he engaged in manual labour. From the press of David Niven, printer in Glasgow, he issued in 1788 a small volume, entitled *Poetical Essays*. In the preface he writes :—

The author of the following *Essays*, deprived in early life, by unforeseen misfortunes, of the means of pursuing that liberal plan of education he once

had a prospect of, has not the vanity to imagine they have either that degree of novelty of invention, or correctness of versification, which will stand the test of rigid criticism.

He adds that :—

Some unfavourable circumstances in his situation, by hastening the publication, have prevented them from receiving that degree of correction they would otherwise have obtained.

The volume, which embraces 224 pages, is divided into five departments, — Elegies, Pastorals, Odes, Poetical Essays in the Scottish dialect, and Songs. Written in the manner of Shenstone, the verses entitled “ Myra ” thus proceed :—

The forests are mantled in green,
 The hawthorn in blossom looks gay,
 The primrose and daisy are seen,
 And birds carol sweet on the spray.
 'Tis now the gay season of love,
 Soft raptures inspire every heart ;
 Come, Myra, retire to the grove,
 While I my fond passion impart.

You say that you doubt if I love ;
 From whence can such fancies arise ?
 If words are too languid to prove,
 'Tis seen in the glance of mine eyes.
 Believe me, thou charmer divine,
 Those valleys can witness my pain,
 The streams join their murmurs with mine,
 And the echoes have learn'd to complain.

I'm young, and too simple to lie,
 To call thee a goddess or queen ;
 My flame is reveal'd in that sigh,
 My blushes explain what I mean.

My passion's so mild and sincere,
 And chaste as the innocent dove ;
 I call thee not false nor severe,
 'Tis sure the completest of love.

I walk by the whispering grove,
 Where the zephyrs sound soft thro' the spray,
 I mourn with the amorous dove,
 And join the sweet nightingale's lay.
 Those sounds are so mournfully sweet,
 That mirth seems unpleasant to me
 I'd leave the fond thought with regret
 Of indulging a passion for thee.

I lie by the verge of the stream,
 Whose murmurs oft lull me to rest
 I court the kind flattering dream,
 To lay me supine on thy breast ;
 I wake, and I fold thee in vain,
 The shade is too subtle to keep ;
 I foolishly dote on my pain,
 And find it a pleasure to weep.

The pleasures that wait on the spring,
 The flowers and the fair-budding tree,
 The joys that the summer can bring,
 Are tasteless when absent from thee :
 The warblers that sing from the grove,
 In vain do their melody flow ;
 But when with the maid that I love
 'Tis enchantment wherever I go.

I covet not jewels and gold ;
 The rich I unenvied can see ;
 No treasure on earth I behold,
 No jewel so precious as thee.

With me to my cottage retire,
 Unburthen'd with treasure and wealth,
 Let love all our pleasures inspire,
 And live in contentment and health.

A poem entitled "The Bard," inscribed to Mr. R[obert] B[urns], is written in the Spenserian stanza, and abounds in obsolete words. We quote the opening stanza :—

O thou, whom from the pleasant banks of Ayr
 Thy merit summon'd to Edina's walls,
 Whose songs delight her sons and daughters fair,
 And loudly echo through their splendid halls ;
 On thee a simple Poet humbly calls,—
 A simple Poet, who obscured the while,
 The fear of scornful critic sore appals ;
 On whom, if Coila's Bard vouchsafe to smile,
 His name shall spread abroad thro' Albion's sea-girt isle.

A poem of some length, descriptive of scenery on "Irvine Water," abounds in graceful touches. In a poem on the "Vicissitudes of Fortune," the writer refers to some of the circumstances of his early life, and to the changes in his worldly fortune, and concludes plaintively :—

But, ah ! how vain are human schemes,
 Illusive visions, empty dreams,
 Which, when we grasp, our hope's betray'd,
 We lose the substance for the shade.

Abandoning handicraft labour, Turnbull turned his attention to the drama, and became a player. He was one of Sutherland's company at Dumfries, which Burns warmly patronized before he left Ellisland. In his letter to George Thomson, of the 29th October 1793, the Poet quotes and recommends to his correspondent's notice four of Turnbull's songs. He writes :—

Your objection to the English song I proposed for "John Anderson, my jo," is certainly just. The following is by an old acquaintance of mine, and, I think, has merit. The song was never in print, which, I think, is so much in your favour. The more original good poetry your collection contains, it certainly has so much the more merit :—

SONG BY GAVIN TURNBULL.

Tune—"John Anderson, my jo."

O condescend, dear charming maid,
 My wretched state to view,
 A tender swain to love betray'd,
 And sad despair, by you.

While here all melancholy
 My passion I deplore,
 Yet urged by stern, resistless fate,
 I love thee more and more.

I heard of love, and with disdain
 The urchin's power denied ;
 I laugh'd at every lover's pain,
 And mock'd them when they sigh'd.

But now my state is altered,
 Those happy days are o'er ;
 For all thy unrelenting hate
 I love thee more and more.

O yield, illustrious beauty, yield,
 No longer let me mourn ;
 And though victorious in the field,
 Thy captive do not scorn.

Let generous pity warm thee,
 My wonted peace restore ;
 And grateful I shall bless thee still,
 And love thee more and more.

The following address of Turnbull's to the Nightingale will suit as an English song to the air "There was a lass, and she was fair." By the by, Turnbull has a great many songs in MS. which I can command, if you like his manner. Possibly, as he is an old friend of mine, I may be prejudiced in his favour; but I like some of his pieces very much.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

Thou sweetest minstrel of the grove,
That ever tried the plaintive strain,
Awake thy tender tale of love,
And soothe a poor forsaken swain.

For though the Muses deign to aid,
And teach him smoothly to complain;
Yet Delia, charming, cruel maid,
Is deaf to her forsaken swain.

All day with fashion's gaudy sons
In sport she wanders o'er the plain;
Their tales approve, and still she shuns
The notes of her forsaken swain.

When evening shades obscure the sky,
And bring the solemn hours again,
Begin, sweet bird, thy melody,
And soothe a poor forsaken swain.

I shall just transcribe another of Turnbull's which would go charmingly to "Lewie Gordon:"—

LAURA.

Let me wander where I will,
By shady wood, or winding rill;
Where the sweetest May-born flowers
Paint the meadows, deck the bowers;

Where the linnet's early song
 Echoes sweet the woods among :
 Let me wander where I will,
 Laura haunts my fancy still.

If at rosy dawn I choose
 To indulge the smiling Muse ;
 If I court some cool retreat,
 To avoid the noontide heat ;
 If beneath the moon's pale ray,
 Thro' unfrequented wilds I stray :
 Let me wander where I will,
 Laura haunts my fancy still.

When at night the drowsy god
 Waves his sleep-compelling rod,
 And to fancy's wakeful eyes
 Bids celestial visions rise ;
 While with boundless joy I rove
 Thro' the fairy land of love :
 Let me wander where I will,
 Laura haunts my fancy still.

Replying to our Poet's letter, Mr. Thomson writes : " Your friend Mr. Turnbull's songs have doubtless considerable merit ; and, as you have the command of his manuscripts, I hope you will find some that will answer, as English songs, to the airs yet unprovided."

Early in 1794 Turnbull printed by subscription, in pamphlet form, a small collection of his poems. Writing in 1798, Alexander Campbell, in his *History of Poetry in Scotland*, remarks that " the ' Poetical Essays ' of Mr. Turnbull are such as to do him the highest credit ;" he adds, " I am hopeful he will go on ; for, in truth, the specimen already before the public gives, so far as I understand, uncommon satisfaction." Mr. Thomas Crichton of

Paisley, in a memoir of Alexander Wilson, written in 1819,¹ remarks :—

With Gavin Turnbull, another young author, who sometimes visited Wilson, I was well acquainted. The volume of poems which he published . . . consists mostly of poems of the elegiac or melancholy cast, songs, and a few pieces in the Scottish dialect of the humorous kind. . . . When I became acquainted with Turnbull, he was like his friend Wilson, involved in pecuniary difficulties, owing, in a great measure, to his having neglected to prosecute with diligence the mechanical employment which he had been taught, devoting so much of his time and attention to writing verses, and to his having become inconsiderately an unsuccessful author. When he made his occasional visits to Paisley, I had often an opportunity of conversing with him ; and, when at a distance, he was sometimes my correspondent. He was a well-informed young man, had read a great deal of poetry, and was particularly fond of Shenstone, of whose elegies and pastorals he was a successful imitator ; and he had a very correct judgment in criticizing the poetical compositions of others. Like our late townsman, Tannahill, he had a happy talent for song-writing. His poetical genius introduced him to the acquaintance of Burns, who ranked him among his friends. . . . This young poet, by his devotedness to his favourite pursuit, got into an unsettled mode of life, entered on the stage, and soon after married one of the actresses. The last time I ever saw him, I think, was on the streets of Glasgow, some time during 1792, when he was passing along with a number of the theatrical party, when I had a short conversation with him, and bade him a kind adieu.

Gavin Turnbull and his wife emigrated to the United States ; their future history cannot be traced. Turnbull was small in stature, and of a dark complexion.

¹ "Biographical Sketches of Alexander Wilson" in the *Weavers' Magazine*, vol. ii. Paisley, 1819.

JAMES TYTLER.

THE Rev. George Tytler, ordained minister of Premnay, Aberdeenshire, in 1733, was in 1745 translated to Fearn in the county of Forfar, and there died on the 29th July 1785, in the seventy-ninth year of his age and fifty-second of his ministry.¹ By his wife, Janet Robertson, he had two sons, James and Henry William.

Henry William, the second son, born at Fearn in 1752, practised as a physician, first at Brechin and afterwards at Edinburgh. In 1793 he issued in quarto a translation of Callimachus in English verse; in 1797, *Pædotrophia; or, the Art of Nursing and Rearing Children*, a poem translated from the Latin of Scevole de Ste. Marthe; and, in 1804, *A Voyage Home from the Cape of Good Hope, and other Poems*. He completed a translation of the seventeen books of the poem on the Runic Wars by Silius Italicus, but this work has not been printed. Dr. Tytler died on the 24th August 1808.

James, elder son of the Rev. George Tytler, is the subject of the present memoir. Educated by his father, especially in classical learning, he chose the medical profession, and was articled as apprentice to Mr. Ogilvie, surgeon and chemist, at Forfar. Thereafter he attended medical classes at Edinburgh, having acquired the necessary funds by making two voyages as surgeon on board a Greenland whaler. Completing his medical studies, he contracted marriage with a woman in humble life, and attempted at Edinburgh to obtain practice as a surgeon. Finding the profits of his vocation utterly inadequate to the pressing wants of his household, he removed to Leith, and there opened a shop for the sale of chemical preparations. To this step he was induced partly in the belief that, having joined

¹ *Fasti Eccl. Scot.*, iii. 591, 831.

the Glassites, a new religious sect, of which his wife was a member, he would from the members of that society receive the requisite encouragement. His connexion with the Glassites was soon afterwards dissolved. Sustaining mercantile embarrassments, he proceeded to Berwick, and afterwards to Newcastle, in both these places seeking employment by preparing for druggists certain chemical compounds. Again lacking success, he contracted obligations he could not satisfy, and, being pursued by his creditors, he in 1772 sought shelter from arrest by entering the sanctuary at Holyrood. Meanwhile his wife returned to her relations, carrying with her their five children, of whom the youngest was only six months old. For the privation of domestic happiness he solaced himself by composing a humorous ballad entitled "The Pleasures of the Abbey." From the sanctuary of Holyrood he afterwards issued *Essays on the most important Subjects of Natural and Revealed Religion*. This work was unwritten, but was set up in types by his own hand as the ideas arose in his mind, and was also printed by him at a press of his own construction. He had intended to extend his essays to a second volume, but, as the first was completed, he turned aside to attack the doctrines of the Bereans, a new religious sect. In producing this work, which he entitled, *A Letter to Mr. John Barclay on the Doctrine of Assurance*, he again performed the functions of author, compositor, and pressman. Within the precincts of the Abbey he next started the *Gentleman's and Lady's Magazine*, which he soon abandoned for the *Weekly Review*, a miscellany which also had a brief existence. *An Abridgment of the Universal History* was his next enterprise; he prepared one volume, according to his former method.

Mr. Tytler now ventured to leave the miserable apartments which he had occupied in the debtors' sanctuary for more comfortable quarters, first at Restalrig, next at Duddingston, and afterwards in the city. At Duddingston he was accommodated in the cottage

of a washerwoman, whose inverted tub formed his ordinary writing-table. By the booksellers employed as a translator and editor, he contrived to secure their esteem and confidence. And now an important undertaking was entrusted to his care. The first edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, commenced in 1771 under the editorship of Mr. William Smellie, and comprised in three quarto volumes, had proved a financial success, and a new and extended issue was contemplated. But the proprietors, Messrs. Bell & Macfarquhar, failed in inducing Mr. Smellie to join them in the new enterprise, and in their emergency they applied to Mr. Tytler. In the prospect of being rejoined by his wife and children, he undertook the duties of editor and compiler, under the stinted allowance of sixteen shillings per week. The money was received weekly, and one of Mr. Tytler's daughters, then a small girl, used to relate in after years that she was despatched by her father for his weekly allowance, and that she was made aware that on the reception of the money depended the family's next meal. Mr. Tytler was more liberally recompensed when the *Encyclopædia* passed into the third edition. To this edition he contributed, among many other scientific papers, the article "Electricity," which was held to possess a high merit.

While mainly occupied with the *Encyclopædia*, Mr. Tytler prosecuted various scientific enterprises, including a course of experiments in chemistry, electricity, and mechanics. He invented a process for bleaching linen. With a Mr. Robert Wright at Colinton, he was concerned in a manufactory of magnesia, which, on his retiring from the management, realized much money to his partner and successors. Constructing a balloon on the plan of Montgolfier, he ascended from Comely Green on the north of Edinburgh, but, owing to a defect in the mechanism, he was compelled to descend at the distance of a quarter of a mile. The occurrence,

witnessed by a large concourse of spectators, and terminating so unsatisfactorily, brought upon him the sobriquet of "Balloon Tytler."

Mr. Tytler continued his literary activities. Occupying wretched apartments, and the family duties proceeding around him, he composed a *History of Edinburgh*, *Review of Dr. Aitken's Theory of Inflammation*, *Remarks on Pinkerton's "Introduction to the History of Scotland,"* *A Poetical Translation of Virgil's Eclogues*, *An Answer to the Second Part of Paine's "Age of Reason,"* and *A General Index to the Scots Magazine*. He achieved a literary success by compiling *The Edinburgh Geographical Grammar*, which had the merit of superseding Guthrie's *Geographical Grammar*, which, though often reprinted, abounded with errors.

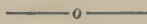
Familiar with poverty, and deficient in self-respect, Mr. Tytler continued to occupy the most wretched lodgings, while he subsisted on the coarsest food, and presented himself on the public streets clad in the meanest apparel. Subject to moods of despondency, he had recourse to stimulants, and was understood at intervals to be under the influence of liquor. With only a few companions, he, instead of frequenting the clubs, improved his leisure by playing upon the Irish bagpipe, which he did sweetly, or singing favourite melodies, also songs which he had personally written.

Attracted by his musical and poetical tastes, Burns formed his personal acquaintance, but under circumstances of which we are uninformed. When the Poet entered upon the editorship of *The Scots Musical Museum*, he secured him as one of his staff. To the *Museum* Mr. Tytler contributed several songs, including "The Young Man's Dream," and two others, founded on older ditties, beginning, "I hae laid a herring in saut," and "The Bonnie Brucket Lassie." Referring to the last, the Poet writes in one of his *Commonplace Books* :—

The two first lines of this song are all of it that is old. The rest of the song, as well as those songs in the *Museum* marked T, are the works of an obscure, tipping, but extraordinary body of the name of Tytler, commonly known by the name of "Balloon Tytler," from his having projected a balloon; a mortal who, though he drudges about Edinburgh as a common printer, with leaky shoes, a sky-lighted hat, and knee-buckles as unlike as George-by-the-grace-of-God, and Solomon-the-son-of-David; yet that same unknown, drunken mortal is author and compiler of three-fourths of Elliot's pompous *Encyclopædia Britannica*, which he composed at half a guinea a week.

As a literary and scientific writer Mr. Tytler attained wide recognition. At his humble dwelling in Hastie's Close, Adam Square, he was visited by persons of various stations, seeking counsel on general affairs, and in quest of literary assistance. Known as a contributor to the *Medical Commentaries*, he was in the year 1792 employed by a surgeon to prepare for publication *A System of Surgery*. He was engaged with this work, when, in opposition to his former modes, he rashly allied himself with those political malcontents known as the "Society of Friends of the People." In this connexion he entered into an exposition of the abuses of government in *A Pamphlet on the Excise*, and more systematically in a periodical publication, entitled *The Historical Register*, in which he largely indulged in personal invective. Next entering into the extreme views of the British Convention, he issued a handbill, written in a style so inflammatory as to be deemed seditious by the authorities. A warrant was issued for his apprehension, and, after skulking some time in Edinburgh, he contrived to escape to Ireland, where he resumed his literary labours. Cited before the High Court of Justiciary, and not appearing, he was on the 7th January 1793 subjected to outlawry. After an interval he sailed for the United States, and, proceeding to Salem in Massachusetts, he there, in connexion with a printer, established a newspaper. At Salem in 1799 he published *A Treatise on the*

Plague and Yellow Fever, in an octavo volume. His literary diligence continued, accompanied, unhappily, with occasional relapses into intemperate habits. He was accidentally drowned in a clay-pit near Salem in January 1804. On quitting Edinburgh in 1792, he bade a final adieu to his wife and children, all of whom sought subsistence by handicraft labour. In 1805 a biographical sketch of his life and labours, accompanied by a portrait, was published anonymously, the author being Mr. Robert Meek, who had formed a high estimate of his integrity and virtues.



PROFESSOR JOSIAH WALKER.

ELIZABETH KNOX, third and youngest daughter of John Knox, the celebrated Reformer, married, in 1594, about her twenty-fourth year, Mr. John Welsh, successively minister of the parishes of Selkirk, Kirkeudbright, and Ayr. In 1606 Mr. Welsh was banished to France by James VI., for asserting the independence of the Church. Returning to Great Britain, he died at London on the 2nd April 1622, at the age of fifty-three; his wife, Elizabeth Knox, died at Ayr in January 1625. To the spouses were born three sons and two daughters. Louise, the youngest daughter, born at Jonsac, in France, in May 1613, is believed to have settled in Fifeshire, and there married, one of her daughters becoming the wife of David Walker, a farmer in the parish of Leslie, and member of a family rigidly devoted to the Presbyterian polity.¹

¹ For details we refer to *Genealogical Memoirs of John Knox*, printed for the Grampian Club, pp. 142-153. While the connexion between the Knox-Welsh family and that of

Walker rests upon tradition, that tradition is so strong and definite in every branch of the Walker family, that its origin can be accounted for only on the belief of a veritable basis.

From a stray volume of the baptismal register of Leslie, preserved in the library of Worcester College, Oxford, we find that David Walker was baptized on the 7th February 1630. He had a son, David, who, born in 1666,¹ was licensed to preach in July 1687, and was ordained joint-minister of Temple, in the Presbytery of Dalkeith, in November 1688, becoming in 1692 sole minister of the parish.² A man of remarkable piety, he kept a journal, in which he made a daily record of his ministerial labours and religious experiences. It is preserved in the family. Mr. Walker died on the 14th August 1737, in the seventy-seventh year of his age and forty-ninth of his ministry. By his wife, Margaret Paterson, he had four sons, Archibald, Josias, David, and Thomas; also three daughters, Margaret, Anne, and Christian.

Archibald Walker, the eldest son, licensed to preach 26th April 1732, was ordained minister of Temple, in succession to his father, on the 28th September 1738; he died on the 28th January 1760. By his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of William Carlisle, merchant, Glasgow, he left issue.³

Josias, second son of Mr. David Walker, was baptized on the 11th January 1695. He graduated at the University of Edinburgh, and was ordained minister of Abdie, in Fifeshire, on the 27th April 1721. He died 17th May 1745. By his wife, Margaret, eldest daughter of Sir Michael Balfour, Bart., of Denmyln, he had a son, David.⁴

Thomas, fourth and youngest son of Mr. David Walker, minister of Temple, born in 1703, lauréated at the University of Edinburgh on the 26th March 1723, and, on the 6th June 1727, was licensed by the Presbytery of Dalkeith. He was, on the 24th August 1732, ordained minister of Dundonald, in the county of Ayr. For the duties of the pastoral office he had made careful and earnest pre-

¹ Family MS.

² *Fasti Eccl. Scot.*, i. 308.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.* ii. 468.

paration. From his eighteenth year, he, in the manner of his father, kept a journal, in which he recorded the daily occurrences of his life, together with his spiritual exercises. The MS., which commences on the 16th November 1721, is continued till March 1749, and is a not uninteresting record of the activities of a faithful pastorate. Devoted to literary studies and theological inquiry, Mr. Walker published at Edinburgh, in 1774, an octavo volume of upwards of four hundred pages, entitled *A Vindication of the Discipline and Constitution of the Church of Scotland for Preserving Purity of Doctrine, in reply to a Book entitled, "The Religious Establishment in Scotland examined upon Protestant Principles," addressed to the Author of that Book.* In his work Mr. Walker attacks the theory of Socinus with much cogency and force; he otherwise indulges a tone of geniality and humour. After a period of declining health, Mr. Walker died on the 13th August 1780, in the seventy-seventh year of his age and forty-eighth of his ministry. A volume of *Essays and Sermons* from his pen was published posthumously.

Mr. Thomas Walker of Dundonald was thrice married. By his first wife, Mary Montgomerie, he had a daughter, Jean, who died young. He married, secondly, 21st May 1742, Jean, daughter of Mr. James Robertson, minister of Craigie, by his wife, Anna, daughter of John Wallace of Holmston, by whom he had three sons. David, the eldest, born 11th July 1743, became factor to a Glasgow company trading with Maryland, and died in 1780. Robert, the second son, born 24th June 1745, adopted the nautical profession; he sailed in a merchant vessel from Bristol about the year 1770, which, not being heard of, was supposed to have foundered at sea. James, the third son, born 22nd March 1747, settled in the West Indies, where he died in 1781. Mr. Thomas Walker married, thirdly, on the 2nd March 1749, Anne, eldest daughter of William Shaw, ship-

builder, Irvine, with issue, six sons and three daughters. Two of the daughters, each named Mary, died in childhood. Margaret, born 15th June 1752, married, 25th April 1785, Mr. William Grierson, minister of Glencairn ; she died 11th April 1816, leaving issue. William, born 5th November 1755, died young. Archibald, born 21st January 1758, proceeded to Maryland in 1772, as clerk to his brother David. Refusing to serve in the revolutionary army under General Washington, he, in 1777, returned to this country. In 1779 he embarked as a marine officer on board a privateer armed with thirty-two guns, which was lost at sea, with all on board.

Thomas, born 2nd August 1759, studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh, and, in 1777, proceeded to Antigua as assistant to Dr. Aird, surgeon. He afterwards became surgeon to the 33rd Regiment of Foot, and, in 1790, settled as a medical practitioner in Irvine, where he died in 1833. He married, in 1793, Mary, second daughter of Charles Fleming of Montgomeryfield, Irvine, with issue four sons, Thomas, Charles, Josiah, and William Montgomery ; also four daughters, Margaret, Elizabeth, Mary Anne, and Millicent Rebecca.

Josiah, youngest son of Mr. Thomas Walker by his third wife, Anne Shaw, was born in the manse of Dundonald on the 8th July 1761. Studying at the University of Edinburgh, he there graduated. Afterwards devoting himself to tutorial work, he prosecuted that vocation at Edinburgh for the period of seven years. On the 28th January 1783 he was elected a member of the Speculative Society, and in connexion with the institution composed essays "On the Lawfulness of Suicide," and on the "Circumstances which contributed to form the Character of the French," also "A Pindaric Ode on American Independence."¹

Early in 1787, Josiah Walker was preferred to the office of

¹ *History of the Speculative Society of Edinburgh*, p. 159.

private tutor to the Marquis of Tullibardine, eldest son of John, fifth Duke of Athole, then in his ninth year. He subsequently accompanied his pupil to Eton, and continued in attendance upon him until his death, which took place in 1796. His acquaintance with the Poet commenced under circumstances which he has circumstantially related. He writes :—

Early in the year 1787 a friend from Edinburgh informed me of the sensation then created in that city by a bard of my native county, and promised to bring me his volume on a subsequent visit. By his praise of its contents my expectations were very moderately excited, as in my own mind I instantly classed the poetical ploughman with the poetical milkmaids and thrashers of England, of whose productions I was no violent admirer. But, had the case been otherwise, all I could have anticipated would have been far surpassed. I was born within a few miles of the cottage of Alloway, and in that vicinity I chiefly spent those years of youth when impressions are most lively and permanent, and continue to be recalled through life with frequency and fondness, by bringing along with them that portion of the past on which it is most pleasing to dwell. The same horizon which presented its daily outline to his eye was also mine. In the same dialect, even to accents and phrases of the most limited locality, we both first learned to express our thoughts, and to both the *patois* of Kyle appeared, for many years, to be the only language of nature. Thus prepared, the poems were put into my hands; and before finishing a page I experienced emotions of surprise and delight of which I had never been so conscious before. The language that I had begun to despise, as fit for nothing but colloquial vulgarity, seemed to be transfigured by the sorcery of genius into the genuine language of poetry. It expressed every idea with a brevity and force, and bent itself to every subject with a pliancy in which the most perfect languages too often fail. Every line awakened a train of associations; every phrase struck a note which led the mind to perform the accompaniment. On every page the stamp of genius was impressed. All was touched by a hand of that astonishing dexterity, as to seem only performing its easiest and most habitual functions, when accomplishing what every other would attempt in vain. I never quitted the volume till I had finished its perusal; and I can recollect no equal period to have passed more rapidly than the hours in which I was thus engaged.

In a subsequent narrative Mr. Walker proceeds to supply details of his forming the Poet's personal acquaintance at the breakfast-table of Dr. Blacklock, and on the evening of the succeeding day at the supper-table of Dr. Blair. These details are embodied elsewhere in the present work. Mr. Walker and the Poet afterwards met at the table of Professor Dugald Stewart; they soon became warm friends, Mr. Walker estimating alike the Poet's compositions and his striking and manly conversation, while the Bard was gratified with the social qualities and general capabilities and accomplishments of one hailing from the same province.

Though already retained as tutor to the young Marquis, Mr. Walker did not enter on the systematic discharge of his duties till some time after midsummer 1787; he then joined his pupil at the ducal seat of Blair Castle in Perthshire. When, in the following September, the Poet, in his tour with William Nicol, reached Blair-Athole, Mr. Walker received from him a message notifying his arrival at the inn, when he hastened to wait upon him and his friend; and as the Poet had transmitted to the Castle a letter of introduction to the Duke, the Duchess, in his Grace's absence, conveyed through the tutor a request that he and Mr. Nicol would sup and sleep at the Castle. Accepting her Grace's polite invitation, the Poet and his travelling companion remained at the Castle two days, and, as the Duke had returned home and bade the travellers a cordial welcome, the visit had been prolonged but for Mr. Nicol's usual impatience.

Leaving Blair-Athole on the 2nd of September, the Poet proceeded to Inverness, and from thence conveyed to Mr. Walker in prose and verse an expression of his gratitude for the hospitality which had by his friend's noble constituents been extended to him. In his letter to Mr. Walker, which is dated the 5th September, he proceeds:—

MY DEAR SIR,—I have just time to write the foregoing, and to tell you that it was (at least most part of it) the effusion of an half-hour I spent at Bruar. I do not mean it was *extempore*, for I have endeavoured to brush it up as well as Mr. N——’s chat, and the jogging of the chaise would allow. It eases my heart a good deal, as rhyme is the coin with which a poet pays his debts of honor or gratitude. What I owe to the noble family of Athole, of the first kind, I shall ever proudly boast; what I owe of the last, so help me God in my hour of need! I shall never forget. The “little angel-band!” I declare I prayed for them very sincerely to-day at the Fall of Fyers. I shall never forget the fine family piece I saw at Blair: the amiable, the truly noble Duchess, with her smiling little seraph in her lap, at the head of the table; the lovely “olive plants,” as the Hebrew bard finely says, round the happy mother; the beautiful Mrs. Graham, the lovely sweet Miss Cathcart.¹ I wish I had the powers of Guido to do them justice. My Lord Duke’s kind hospitality—markedly kind indeed; Mr. Graham of Fintray’s charms of conversation; Sir W. Murray’s friendship: in short, the recollection of all that polite, agreeable company raises an honest glow in my bosom.

This communication was appended to the Poet’s verses entitled, “The Humble Petition of Bruar Water to the noble Duke of Athole.” In the last stanza the Poet specially alludes to the family circle at the Castle in these lines:—

So may old Scotia’s darling hope,
 Your little angel-band,
 Spring, like their fathers, up to prop
 Their honour’d native land!
 So may, through Albion’s farthest ken,
 To social-flowing glasses,
 The grace be—“Athole’s honest men,
 And Athole’s bonnie lasses!”

¹ Mrs. Graham of Balgowan and Miss Cathcart were daughters of Lord Cathcart and sisters of the Duchess of Athole. All the three sisters predeceased the Poet. The portrait of Mrs. Graham, by Gainsborough, is now in the

National Portrait Gallery at Edinburgh. Her husband, Thomas Graham of Balgowan, entered the army after her death, and became known as the hero of Barossa; he was created Lord Lynedoch. He died in 1843, at the age of ninety-four.

In allusion to Mr. Walker's attention to him during his Blair-Athole visit, the Poet has in his Journal the following entry: "Confirmed in my good opinion of my friend Walker."

Towards the end of October 1787 Mr. Walker visited Burns at the house of Mr. William Cruikshank, in St. James's Square, Edinburgh.

I found him—writes Mr. Walker—seated by the harpsichord of this young lady [Mr. Cruikshank's daughter], listening with the keenest interest to his own verses, which she sang and accompanied, and adjusting them to the music by repeated trials of the effect. In this occupation he was so totally absorbed that it was difficult to draw his attention from it for a moment.

Accompanying his pupil to Eton, Mr. Walker does not seem to have renewed his intimacy with the Poet during the long period of seven years. But in November 1794¹ he paid him a special visit at Dumfries. He found the Poet "sitting in a window-seat reading, with the doors open, and the family arrangements going on in his presence." The Poet invited his visitor to accompany him in a walk by the Nith's banks. During the walk he repeated the fragment of his "Ode to Liberty."

On the afternoon of the second day, the friends had a social meeting at the Globe tavern, and on this occasion Mr. Walker remarked that the Bard lacked in his conversation somewhat of the unaffected ease of former times.

Through a cerebral ailment, which terminated fatally in 1796, the young Marquis of Tullibardine was unable to prosecute his studies, with the result that Mr. Walker was, as his preceptor, thrown out of employment. But Mr. Walker was not long afterwards appointed, on the nomination of the Duke of Athole, to the

¹ In his printed narrative Professor Walker names the year of his visit as 1795: this has been shown to be a slip of memory.

Collectorship of Customs at Perth, one of those offices which were not unfrequently reserved as a recompense for scholastic or literary service. In 1782 Mr. Walker had evinced a poetical aptitude by publishing, in quarto, his "Monody on John Thurlow, Esq.," which, in 1785, he followed by printing, in quarto, an "Ode addressed to the Society of Universal Good-Will." When, at the close of his tutorial labours, he commanded a more abundant leisure, he devoted himself to literary composition with an abundant ardour.

When the *Perth Courier* newspaper was established in the Conservative interest, he was appointed to the editorship, and retained the connexion for a period of years. On the original staff of the *Encyclopædia Perthensis*, he became one of its principal writers. In composing for that work a memoir of William Pitt, he found a congenial occupation, but he has with equal geniality and candour portrayed the career of Charles Fox, Pitt's illustrious rival. When the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia* was started, he was, by the editor, Dr. Brewster, nominated as a contributor, and his article on the Crusades in that publication is a historical composition of singular interest and value.

On the recommendation of Professor Dugald Stewart, Mr. Walker was induced to translate the fables of the Duke de Nivernois, which he did in elegant verse. As the work has long been out of print, a specimen may not be unacceptable.

THE HEIFER SACRIFICED.

An heifer, doom'd to pay with blood
 The debt of human gratitude,
 In gorgeous pomp by priests was led
 Where Jove's high altar rear'd its head.
 Her temples wore a flowery wreath ;
 Sad ornament !—presage of death.

In truth, the King of Gods was wise,
To shut his book from human eyes ;
For stale and weary life would grow,
Were men their future doom to know.
Our heifer, with exulting pride,
Beheld the crowds, on either side,
Who throng'd with smiling flowers to spread
The avenue to death that led.
Two bulls, whose neck a yoke oppress'd
She passed ; and Fortune inly bless'd
For fixing her exalted place
Above a destiny so base.
How little did the heifer know
The real state of things below !
How ignorant is simple youth !
How ready to misjudge the truth !
Thus seeks the nymph, whose royal hand
Has been betroth'd, a foreign land ;
There to embrace the nuptial vow ;
Crowds, as she goes, adoring bow ;
And she, poor maid, with pitying mind,
Regards the homely village hind—
The village hind, more happy far
Than she in her triumphal car.
At length, with splendid celebration,
Arrives the day of immolation,
And robs the heifer of her life ;
Of liberty the royal wife.
We oft remark, that, by the fate
Assigned to this imperial state,
If one a step of honour gains,
Less private happiness remains ;
And this exchange appears to rest
In what for general good is best.
On chosen men when nations shower,
As proofs of favour, rank or power,

The partial measure justice blames,
 And deems unfair to other claims,
 Unless they duly pay the price
 By some heroic sacrifice.
 This maxim let us then approve—
 A maxim generous bosoms love :
 May we the humble happy see ;
 The exalted still the victims be !

In 1802 Mr. Walker published, in a small octavo volume, a poem entitled "The Defence of Order." Dedicated to his patron, the Duke of Athole, the author sought to celebrate the achievements of the Pitt ministry, on a scale more extensive than that of Addison's "Campaign." Of the work two considerable editions were exhausted within the year of issue, and when, in 1803, a third edition was produced, the work was deemed sufficiently important for an attack in the *Edinburgh Review*. The assailant was Henry Brougham, who, in seeking to crush Mr. Walker's poem, exerted his utmost powers of irony and sarcasm. The critic triumphed, for the poem at once waned in popular favour, and the sale at length all but ceased. Though lacking in unity, and in didactic force, "The Defence of Order" abounds in graceful diction. Mr. Pitt is celebrated thus :—

Even he, who now, from Scotia's distant shore,
 His faint and feeble note presumes to pour,
 Partakes, in common with a rescued land,
 The safety earned by thy protecting hand.
 If Peace and Comfort round his humble shed,
 And Hope serene, their balmy pinions spread ;
 If still his hours with noiseless current flow,
 Nor harsh reverse nor rude obstruction know ;
 If still his board a wholesome meal display,
 And promise such to-morrow as to-day ;

If still he feel, remote from storms and strife,
 The charms of nature and the sweets of life ;
 If still the Muse's woodland haunts he range,
 Unvexed by tumult, unalarmed by change ;
 If still he meet the rustic groups around,
 In manners sober and in morals sound ;
 Exchange kind greetings with the cordial boor,
 And mark no sullen breach 'twixt rich and poor :
 Whate'er of good he feel, of comfort see,
 All, next to Heaven, O Pitt! he owes to thee.

In 1811 Mr. Walker contributed an original and critical memoir of Burns to an edition of his Poetical Works projected by James Morison of Perth, and published by his trustees. In this work he has, as an intelligent and impartial observer of the Poet's modes, both at the commencement of his public career and also towards its close, rendered eminent literary service.

Mr. Walker was in 1815 preferred to an office which he was pre-eminently qualified to adorn ; he was elected Professor of Humanity in the University of Glasgow. As a professor he proved assiduous and painstaking, while his weekly lectures on themes connected with Roman literature were alike distinguished by clearness of detail and elegance of diction. Possessing the confidence of his students, he seldom had occasion to reprove, while he rejoiced, as opportunity offered, to encourage the diligent. He taught humanity, it was remarked, not more by prelections in Roman literature than by the urbanity of his manners. Of those who have favoured us with reminiscences of Professor Walker, Mr. Urquhart, Free Church minister at Portpatrick, remarks that he cherishes the memory of his old preceptor with esteem, reverence, and gratitude.

Professor Walker excelled as a conversationalist. He had taken part in some interesting scenes, and these he could pleasantly recall.

Abounding in anecdote, his utterances were terse, forcible, and epigrammatic. Habitually jocular, he rejoiced to dilate on the wrecking of his poetical aspirations.

Brougham satisfied me—he would say—that I was not born a poet, and as to the unbound bales of my third edition, I was no worse off than Dr. Rogers, Provost of Eton, author of the poem ‘Judah Restored.’ One of his sons, when he had company, was despatched to the cellar to fetch up an additional bottle of a choice vintage, and as he was on his return asked by him why he had been absent so long, he promptly answered that he had broke his shins on a heavy bale of ‘Judah Restored.’

The Professor was wont with much facetiousness to recall the incidents of his youth. To a poor woman at Dundonald her husband was brought home, shot dead by a bullet through his temples. Among the neighbour wives who assembled to offer their condolence was one who, on remarking the wound, ejaculated emphatically, “Eh sirs! what a merey it missed his e’e.”

After a few years of failing health, Professor Walker died at Glasgow on the 24th August 1831. Two MSS. from his pen are in the possession of his grandchildren, a translation of Anacreon’s Odes, and an autobiographical fragment entitled “The Life of a Manse Household in 1780.” The latter contains a vivid picture of parochial life, including an interesting portraiture of Susannah, Countess of Eglinton, the patron of Allan Ramsay and entertainer of Dr. Samuel Johnson.

Professor Walker married, in 1795, Margaret, daughter of Richard Bell of Cruvie, Dumfriesshire, by whom he had three sons and a daughter.

Russel, only daughter of Professor Walker, married, 23rd August 1827, her cousin, Mr. Thomas Grierson, minister of Kirkbean in the county of Kirkeudbright. This gentleman, who died 15th July 1854, is remembered for his elegant tastes and remarkable jocundity.

He published *Allan Macgregor*, a work of fiction, illustrative of the times of the Disruption, printed a collection of songs composed for his parish curling club, and issued a narrative of several pedestrian excursions he had made in the Highlands, also in the southern uplands. Mrs. Grierson died in 1886, in her ninetieth year.

Thomas, eldest son of Professor Walker, born in 1796, became a doctor of medicine. In 1819 he entered on medical practice at Peterborough, where he attained a first rank in his profession. He died on the 16th December 1886, at the age of ninety-one. He married Mary, daughter of Edward Jenkins, Esq., of Thorpe Park, Peterborough, with issue three sons and five daughters.

Josiah William, the eldest son, born 1833, is M.D., and is engaged in medical practice at Peckham Rye, Surrey. He married, first, Maria, daughter of William Johnston, with issue a son, Thomas Johnston; secondly, Charlotte Henrietta, daughter of Herbert Cornewall of Dilbury Hall, with issue Cecil Geraldine and Archibald Edward.

Thomas James, the second son, born 1835, is M.D. and physician at Peterborough. He married his cousin, Mary Eliza, second daughter of the Rev. Josiah Walker, with issue.

Edward Richard, the third son, born in 1837, is vicar of Billinghay, Lincolnshire.

Of the daughters of Dr. Thomas Walker, Margaret Ellen married James Ellison, M.D., Windsor; Mary Leonora married Walter Power, Esq., Ely; Gertrude Helen married Henry Townsend, Esq., architect, Peterborough; Mary Eliza and Charlotte Sarah are unmarried.

Richard Graham, second son of Professor Walker, some time practised as a solicitor in Glasgow; he subsequently settled at Hendon, Middlesex. He married Eliza, daughter of Captain Winbolt, by whom he had a son, Richard Graham, born 1837, married, 1868,

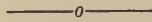
Mary Josephine, daughter of David O'Keiffe, Esq., of Youghal, county Cork ; also two daughters, Eliza, born 1833, married Thomas Sarel, Esq., and Mary Russel, who died in 1854.

Josiah, third and youngest son of Professor Josiah Walker, was born at Perth in 1805. Having studied at the University of Glasgow with a view to the ministry of the Scottish Church, he some time assisted his father in the Humanity classes, and in 1831 became assistant to the Professor of Hebrew in the same University. Unsuccessful as a candidate for the Hebrew chair, when it became vacant in 1832, he in the same year entered Trinity Hall, Cambridge. In 1836 he obtained orders in the Church of England, and was appointed curate at Folkesworth in Huntingdonshire. In 1840 he was appointed to the charge of Stetchworth in Cambridgeshire, and there he added to his emoluments by receiving several young gentlemen as boarders. In 1850 he became vicar of Wood Ditton in the county of Cambridge, an office which he held till 1880, when, owing to the pressure of infirmities, he retired from active duties. Returning to his native country, he established his residence at Edinburgh, where he died on the 14th December 1882, at the age of seventy-eight.

Distinguished for his varied literary acquirements, Mr. Josiah Walker was a clear and forcible expounder of Divine truth. Both in prose and poetry he composed elegantly, and in a small publication entitled *Memorial of a Country Vicar*, edited by his daughter, Mrs. Rogerson, have been preserved some agreeable specimens of his writings. The volume is accompanied by a kindly, well-written memoir by the Rev. E. K. Bennet, D.C.L., as a tribute to a long and honoured friendship.

Mr. Josiah Walker married, in 1838, Mary Rice, daughter of Peter Lock, Esq., Surveyor of H.M. Customs, by whom he had four daughters. Margaret Bell, the eldest daughter, married, in

1879, Mr. Alexander Rogerson of St. Michael's, Lockerbie; Russel Mary, second daughter, born 1843, died in 1860; Mary Eliza, third daughter, married her cousin, Dr. Thomas J. Walker, Peterborough; Christina Jessie, fourth daughter, is unmarried.



SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD, BART.

WALTER DE WHYTFOORD, of the county of Renfrew, is witness to a charter of Alexander II., and in the reign of James I. John Whitefoord of that Ilk is named, while his successors in the barony appear from time to time up to the reign of James VI.

The lands of Whitefoord passed from the elder branch, and the family came to be represented by the Whitefoords of Blairquhan, descended from a younger son of Whitefoord of that Ilk. A brother of Whitefoord of Blairquhan was Abbot of Crossraguel in the reign of James IV. Members of the family held lands at Balloch and Girvan; also the estate of Kirkland at Maybole. They intermarried with many notable families in Ayrshire, including Blair of that Ilk, Kennedy of Ardmillan, and Catheart of Carnock. Dr. Walter Whitefoord, a cadet of the family, was appointed Bishop of Brechin in 1635. In dread of personal violence, he read the Service-book in 1637 with closed doors, himself and his attendants being severally armed. By the General Assembly of 1638 he was deposed and excommunicated; he thereafter took refuge in England.

Adam Whitefoord of Blairquhan was created a baronet on the 30th December 1701; he died in 1728. By his wife, Margaret Catheart, only daughter of Alan, seventh Lord Catheart, he had three sons, John, Alan, and Charles. Charles, the third son, was colonel of the 5th Regiment of Foot. His son Caleb was the celebrated wit and satirical poet.

Born at Edinburgh in 1734, Caleb Whitefoord was by his father intended for the clerical profession, but, as the proposal was distasteful to him, he was sent to London, and was there apprenticed to a wine merchant. Having assisted in the counting-house about four years, he on his father's death in 1753 proceeded to France, where he remained two years, till he attained his majority. Possessing a considerable patrimony, he on his return from the Continent commenced business as a wine merchant in Craven Street, Strand, in partnership with a friend. Devoted to literary pursuits, he joined the Literary Club, and became an intimate associate of Dr. Samuel Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Dr. Goldsmith. Having got acquainted with Woodfall the printer, he at that gentleman's solicitation became a contributor of satirical pieces, both in prose and verse, to the *Public Advertiser*. His contributions were afterwards reproduced in *The Foundling Asylum for Wit*. Directing the shafts of his ridicule against Wilkes and other levellers, he attracted the attention of the Ministry, and on their behalf was requested to write a pamphlet on the subject of the misunderstanding which subsisted between Great Britain and Spain, relative to the Falkland Islands. He declined the task, but recommended Dr. Johnson, who was accordingly employed. A humorous conversationalist, Mr. Whitefoord drew forth the remark of Dr. Goldsmith that it was impossible to be in his company without being infected by his itch for punning. In "The Retaliation" Goldsmith has celebrated him in these lines:—

Here Whitefoord reclines, and deny it who can,
Though he merrily liv'd, he is now a grave man :
Rare compound of oddity, frolic, and fun !
Who relish'd a joke, and rejoiced in a pun,
Whose temper was generous, open, sincere,
A stranger to flatt'ry, a stranger to fear,

Who scatter'd around wit and humour at will,
 Whose daily *bon mots* half a column might fill ;
 A Scotchman, from pride and from prejudice free ;
 A scholar, yet surely no pedant was he !

What pity ! alas, that so lib'ral a mind
 Should so long be to newspaper-essays confin'd !
 Who perhaps to the summit of science could soar,
 Yet content " if the table be set in a roar ;"
 Whose talents to fill any station were fit,
 Yet happy if Woodfall confess'd him a wit.

Ye newspaper wittings ! ye pert scribbling folks !
 Who copied his squibs and re-echoed his jokes ;
 Ye tame imitators, ye servile herd, come,
 Still follow your master and visit his tomb ;
 To deck it, bring with you festoons of the vine,
 And copious libations bestow on his shrine,
 Then strew all around it (you can do no less)
*Cross-readings, ship-news, and mistakes of the press,*¹

Merry Whitefoord, farewell ! for thy sake I admit
 That a Scot may have humour, I had almost said wit ;
 This debt to thy mem'ry I cannot refuse,
 Thou best-humour'd man with the worst-humour'd muse.

According to Dr. Adam Smith, wits and authors who hated each other united in a common respect for Mr. Whitefoord. When Commissioners were appointed to treat of a general peace with America, Mr. Whitefoord was, owing to his intimacy with Dr. Franklin, appointed secretary to the British Commission. He died in 1809, at the age of seventy-five.

Alan, second son of Sir Adam Whitefoord of Blairquhan, the first baronet, acquired the lands of Ballochmyle ; he is believed to have been the person of the name who was taken prisoner by the Highlanders at the battle of Prestonpans, and whose story has been interwoven in the romance of *Waverley*. He died without issue.

¹ In the *Public Advertiser* Mr. Caleb Whitefoord frequently composed pieces under these titles.

John, the eldest son of Sir Adam Whitefoord, served in the army, and acquired the rank of major-general. Succeeding to the baronetcy and ancestral possessions, he was noted for his extravagance. Under the title of Sir Arthur Wardour, he is in the *Antiquary* depicted thus :—

He talked of buying contiguous estates, that would have led him from one side of the island to the other, as if he were determined to brook no neighbour but the sea. He corresponded with an architect of eminence, upon a plan of renovating a castle of his forefathers, on a style of extended magnificence that might have rivalled that of Windsor, and laying out the grounds on a suitable scale. Troops of liveried menials were already, in fancy, marshalled in his halls, and—for what may not unbounded wealth authorize its possessor to aspire to?—the coronet of a marquis, perhaps of a duke, was glittering before his imagination.

It was a part of Sir John Whitefoord's actual extravagance to construct a superb town residence at Edinburgh. This structure, styled Whitefoord House, was reared some time subsequent to 1742, at Galloway's Entry in the Canongate; it occupied part of the site of a larger mansion of the Earl of Winton, noticed by Sir Walter Scott in the *Abbot*, and now converted into a type-founding manufactory.

Sir John Whitefoord, son of the preceding, succeeded as third baronet of Blairquhan. His ancestral estates were alienated, but on the death of his uncle Alan, he succeeded to the lands of Ballochmyle, which yield a present rental of £10,000. Sir John resided at Ballochmyle, and evinced no inconsiderable interest in local affairs. Master of St. James's Freemason Lodge of Tarbolton, he was, subsequent to its separation from its brother lodge of St. David's, in June 1782, called upon to convene a special meeting of the brethren. The event is memorable, inasmuch as the requisition inviting him to convene the lodge was composed by Burns, at a period consider-

ably antecedent to his becoming known as a poet. It contains these words :—

We look on our Mason Lodge to be a serious matter, both with respect to the character of Masonry itself, and likewise as it is a charitable society. This last, indeed, does not interest you further than a benevolent heart is interested in the welfare of its fellow-creatures ; but to us, sir, who are of the lower orders of mankind, to have a fund in view, on which we may with certainty depend to be kept from want, should we be in circumstances of distress, or old age, this is a matter of high importance.

A shareholder in the banking establishment of Douglas, Heron, & Co., of Ayr, which fell into liquidation, Sir John Whitefoord was, in 1785, under the necessity of disposing of his lands. The occurrence awakened general sympathy, and the Poet, who, at Mossiel, resided within two miles of the enclosures of Ballochmyle, composed on the occasion these plaintive lines :—

The Catrine woods were yellow seen,
 The flowers decay'd on Catrine lee,
 Nae lav'rock sang on hillock green,
 But nature sicken'd on the e'e.
 Thro' faded groves Maria sang,
 Hersel' in beauty's bloom the while ;
 And aye the wild-wood echoes rang,
 Fareweel the braes o' Ballochmyle !

Low in your wintry beds, ye flowers,
 Again ye'll flourish fresh and fair ;
 Ye birdies dumb, in with'ring bowers,
 Again ye'll charm the vocal air.
 But here, alas ! for me nae mair
 Shall birdie charm, or floweret smile ;
 Fareweel the bonnie banks of Ayr,
 Fareweel, fareweel ! sweet Ballochmyle !

On a moderate reversion Sir John Whitefoord removed from Ballochmyle to Whitefoord House at Edinburgh, where he was

resident at the time when Burns, on the 28th November 1786, made his *début* in the capital. With Sir John he communicated three days afterwards. In his letter, which is dated the first December, he thus proceeds :—

SIR,—Mr. Mackenzie, in Mauchline, my very warm and worthy friend, has informed me how much you are pleased to interest yourself in my fate as a man, and (what to me is incomparably dearer) my fame as a poet. I have, sir, in one or two instances, been patronized by those of your character in life, when I was introduced to their notice by social friends to them, and honoured acquaintances to me; but you are the first gentleman in the country whose benevolence and goodness of heart has interested himself for me, unsolicited and unknown. I am not master enough of the etiquette of these matters to know, nor did I stay to inquire, whether formal duty bade, or cold propriety disallowed, my thanking you in this manner, as I am convinced, from the light in which you kindly view me, that you will do me the justice to believe that this letter is not the manœuvre of the needy, sharpening author, fastening on those in upper life who honor him with a little notice of him or his works. Indeed, the situation of poets is generally such, to a proverb, as may, in some measure, palliate that prostitution of heart and talents they have at times been guilty of. I do not think prodigality is, by any means, a necessary concomitant of a poetic turn, but, I believe, a careless, indolent inattention to economy is almost inseparable from it; then there must be in the heart of every bard of nature's making a certain modest sensibility, mixed with a kind of pride, which will ever keep him out of the way of those windfalls of fortune which frequently light on hardy impudence and foot-licking servility. It is not easy to imagine a more helpless state than his whose poetic fancy unfits him for the world, and whose character as a scholar gives him some pretensions to the *politesse* of life, yet is as poor as I am. For my own part, I thank heaven my star has been kinder; learning never elevated my ideas above the peasant's shed, and I have an independent fortune at the plough-tail.

Through his friend Dr. Mackenzie the Poet had learned that Sir John had upheld his reputation against a wanton and ungenerous attack, which led to his concluding his letter in these terms :—

I was surprised to hear that any one who pretended in the least to the manners of the gentleman should be so foolish, or worse, as to stoop to traduce the morals of such a one as I am, and so inhumanly cruel, too, as to meddle with that late most unfortunate, unhappy part of my story. With a tear of gratitude, I thank you, sir, for the warmth with which you interposed in behalf of my conduct. I am, I acknowledge, too frequently the sport of whim, caprice, and passion; but reverence to God, and integrity to my fellow-creatures, I hope I shall ever preserve. I have no return to make, sir, for your goodness but one—a return which, I am persuaded, will not be unacceptable—the honest warm wishes of a grateful heart for your happiness, and every one of that lovely flock, who stand to you in a filial relation. If ever Calumny aim the poisoned shaft at them, may Friendship be by to ward the blow!

To the Poet's letter, Sir John's reply is alike courteous and business-like:—

EDINBURGH, 4th December 1786.

SIR,—I received your letter a few days ago. I do not pretend to much interest, but what I have I shall be ready to exert in procuring the attainment of any object you have in view. Your character as a man (forgive my reversing your order), as well as a poet, entitle you, I think, to the assistance of every inhabitant of Ayrshire. I have been told you wish to be made a gauger; I submit it to your consideration, whether it would not be more desirable, if a sum could be raised by subscription for a second edition of your poems, to lay it out in the stocking of a small farm. I am persuaded it would be a line of life much more agreeable to your feelings, and in the end more satisfactory. When you have considered this, let me know, and whatever you determine upon, I will endeavour to promote as far as my abilities will permit.

In a postscript Sir John adds: "I shall take it as a favour when you, at any time, send me a new production."

In letters to Mr. John Ballantine of Ayr, dated the 13th, and to Mr. Robert Muir of Kilmarnock, dated the 15th December, the Poet names Sir John Whitefoord as one of his Edinburgh patrons. In this connexion he associates Sir John with the Duchess of Gordon, the Countess Dowager of Glencairn, Henry Erskine,

Dean of Faculty, Professor Dugald Stewart, and Henry Mackenzie. To Sir John's kindly intervention Burns was chiefly indebted for the liberal patronage of the Caledonian Hunt. After he had intimated his intention of dedicating to the Hunt his second edition, Sir John, at a meeting held on the 10th January 1787, supported a motion by the Earl of Glencairn, that in recognition of the Poet's merit, and of the compliment paid to them, one hundred copies of the work should be subscribed for.¹

Resident in Edinburgh, on a greatly reduced fortune, Sir John Whitefoord sought a life of retirement. In connexion with the Poet, his name reappears on a single occasion only. When Burns composed his celebrated "Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn," he sent a copy to Sir John, accompanied by the following lines:—

Thou, who thy honor as thy God rever'st,
 Who, save thy mind's reproach, nought earthly fear'st,
 To thee this votive offering I impart,
 The tearful tribute of a broken heart.
 The friend thou valuedst, I the patron lov'd ;
 His worth, his honor, all the world approv'd.
 We'll mourn till we too go as he has gone,
 And tread the dreary path to that dark world unknown.

Sir John Whitefoord continued to reside in Whitefoord House, in the Canongate, till his death, which took place in 1803. Tenacious of purpose, and not unconscious of his aristocratic descent, he was reputed for his personal courtesy and the affability of his manners. His figure is portrayed in Kay's *Edinburgh Portraits*.²

Sir John Whitefoord married Alice Mure, a member of the ancient house of Rowallan. A lady of remarkable beneficence and Christian worth, she presented to the kirk-session of Mauchline a

¹ The Earl of Glencairn was one of the original members of the Hunters' Club, afterwards the Caledonian Hunt, having joined on

the 7th August 1777; Sir John Whitefoord joined on the 12th December 1777.

² Kay's *Portraits*, ed. 1842, vol. ii. 56.

silver baptismal basin; it was used for the first time on the 3rd August 1788.¹

The family of Sir John and Lady Whitefoord consisted of two sons and four daughters. Charles, the second son, born at Ballochmyle, 1st December 1770, died in infancy. John, the elder son, was one of the Poet's visitors during his first sojourn in the capital. Writing to Mr. Mackenzie, surgeon, Mauchline, on the 11th January 1787, the Poet proceeds:—

I saw *your* friend and *my* honored patron, Sir John Whitefoord, just after I read your letter, and gave him your respectful compliments. . . . His son, John, who calls very frequently on me, is in a fuss to-day like a coronation. This is the great day—the Assembly and Ball of the Caledonian Hunt; and John has had the good luck to pre-engage the hand of the beauty-famed and wealth-celebrated Miss M'Adam, our countrywoman. Between friends, John is desperately in for it there, and I am afraid will be desperate indeed.²

John Whitefoord, the Poet's visitor, predeceased his father.

Of Sir John Whitefoord's four daughters, Mary Anne, the eldest, married Henry Kerr Cranstoun, grandson of William, fifth Lord Cranstoun, and died without issue. Her husband's sister, Helen D'Arcy, was wife of Professor Dugald Stewart.

—, second daughter, married — Kennedy of Kirkmichael, in Ayrshire, with issue one son, who died unmarried; also two daughters. The elder daughter married a physician in Girvan.

The second daughter had settled upon her, by her brother, the paternal estate; she married, with issue.

Jane, third daughter, married Colonel Francis Cunyngham, without issue.

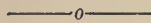
Alice Lucy, fourth daughter, became, on the 29th November

¹ Mauchline Parish Baptismal Register.

² In his poetical epistle to Mr. M'Adam of Craigangillan, the Poet refers to his two daughters thus:—

Heaven spare you long to kiss the breath
O' mony flowery simmers!
And bless your bonny lasses baith—
I'm tauld they're lo'esome kimmers!

1795, second wife of Henry, third Baron Vernon. She died on the 1st August 1827, leaving two sons. Henry Vernon, the elder son, became a lieutenant-colonel in the Grenadier Guards. He married, 29th August 1822, Eliza Grace, daughter of Edward Coke, Esq., of Longford Court, Derbyshire, and niece of Thomas William, first Earl of Leicester, and died 12th December 1845, leaving a son, Edward, and a daughter, Henrietta. John, the younger son, entered into holy orders, and became rector of Nuthall and Kirby-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire. He married, first, 24th November 1830, Frances Barbara, second daughter of Thomas Duncombe of Gossgrave, County York, by whom he had a son, Frederick, born 8th October 1834. His wife dying on the 7th November 1848, the Rev. John Vernon married, secondly, 15th December 1853, Caroline, daughter of the Honourable General Sir Edward Paget, G.C.B. He died on the 11th December 1875.



JOHN WILSON (OF MAUCHLINE).

IN the last sheet of his Kilmarnock edition the Poet has presented the following epitaph on "Wee Johnie."

Whoe'er thou art, O reader, know
 That Death has murder'd Johnie ;
 An' here his *body* lies fu' low ;
 For *saul* he ne'er had ony.

In reference to these lines, Mr. Scott Douglas writes :—

From the day that Burns came before the world as an author till the day of his death, and seventy years beyond that event, the Poet's readers had a tacit understanding that these four lines had been waggishly inserted in the last sheet of the book as a satire—not a very wicked one—on his printer. How that understanding arose, does not appear.¹

¹ Library edition of Burns, Edinburgh, 1877, 8vo, vol. i. p. 328.

What was inexplicable at the time Mr. Scott Douglas composed his note has yielded to a little inquiry. The real "Wee Johnie" of the epitaph was not Mr. John Wilson, the Kilmarnock printer, but another person of the name, who, when the Poet was resident at Mossgiel, conducted business at Mauchline as a bookseller. "Wee Johnie" of Mauchline had, like the Poet himself, some dealings with the parochial session. Before that tribunal he, in terms of a citation, appeared on the 8th December 1785, when he acknowledged himself father of an illegitimate child. His sentence was deferred, there being evidently an inclination on the part of the majority of the court that he should be dealt with leniently. But one of the elders, James Speirs, vigorously dissented, asserting that, on account of Wilson's habitual profanity, any modified course of discipline was unwarranted. There were frequent adjournments, and at length, on the 27th April 1786, Mr. Wilson made a formal complaint against Speirs for slandering him. At a meeting held on the 10th May, the session appointed a committee to hold a conference with Wilson, and resolved, in the event of their reporting favourably as to his penitence, to absolve him on a single appearance. Against this procedure Speirs strongly protested, and charged his brethren as opposing themselves to good order, and "defeating the ends of discipline." Meanwhile the committee unsuccessfully endeavoured to reconcile the elder and the bookseller, but with the result that, at a kirk-session meeting held on the 25th of May, the parties came together before the court. Speirs now "insisted that he was as conscious as he was of anything" that he heard John Wilson swear profanely in a public company. On the other hand, Wilson indignantly denied the imputation, nor would he consent to any compromise unless the elder retracted his accusation, and consented to undergo a punishment—"a punishment proportionable to his offence." The session ruled that Speirs should confess "that he

ought to have spoken with John Wilson in private before introducing this affair into the session ;” they also enjoined him to ask Mr. Wilson’s pardon ; and expressed their judgment that this concession should be accepted by Wilson. The concession was then made and accepted, and a motion was agreed to, dismissing the affair on account of irregularity in procedure, and desiring—

the Moderator to inform James Speirs to be more cautious in bringing accusations of this nature into this court for the future, till he has, agreeably to the form of process, conversed several times with the accused person in private. . . . At the same time the session desired their members to superintend the morals of the people with all possible care, and to observe the rules of the Church in their conduct.

In this transaction John Wilson acted with energy and vigour, affording no ground for any charge as to his being destitute of soul. Not improbably the Poet had, in a moment of grotesque humour, associated his satire with the bookseller in allusion to his smallness of stature rather than owing to his paucity of spirit. By Dr. Robert Chambers it is, we think, made clear that the Poet had prepared the Wilson epitaph after reading *Nugæ Venales, sive Thesaurus ridendi et jocandi*, a work of humour, in which occurs the following epigram :—

Oh Deus omnipotens, vituli miserere Joannis,
 Quem mors præveniens non sinit esse bovem :
 Corpus in Italia est, habet intestina Brabantus
 Ast animam nemo : Cur ? quia non habuit.

— o —

In closing these memoirs the writer conceives that he is called upon to offer some words of explanation. For, in entering on his undertaking, it was his intention to present a full and particular account

of each individual commemorated, with corresponding genealogical details. But, though he cannot charge himself with any lack of diligence, he has, in not a few instances, failed to procure the needful materials. Thus, while the descendants or representatives of a large number of those noticed have courteously responded to his inquiries, others who were expected to be useful have remained silent. Yet, under all his disappointments, the writer believes he has succeeded in procuring as much original information as to justify his labours.

For Volume III. the writer has prepared a narrative of the Poet's lineage from strictly authentic sources, and should he, through feeble health, be unable personally to complete the work, he trusts the various materials which he has brought together may, in the hands of a competent successor, be so utilized as to effectively illustrate the Poet's history, and serve the cause of biographical accuracy.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

BRIEF NOTICES OF OTHER FRIENDS OF THE POET, AND OF PERSONS REFERRED TO IN HIS WRITINGS.

LESLEY BAILLIE.— Daughter of Robert Baillie, Esq., of Mayfield, Ayrshire, this young gentlewoman, who was eminently beautiful, is by the Poet celebrated in his songs beginning, "Oh, saw ye bonnie Lesley," and "Blythe hae I been on yon hill." In dining with Mr. Baillie in July 1788, the Poet was much attracted by the charms of Miss Lesley and her sister. In course of a journey to England, Mr. Baillie and his two daughters visited the Poet at Dumfries in August 1792, and the Bard, who much appreciated this attention, afterwards accompanied them on horseback for fourteen or fifteen miles. Writing to Mrs. Dunlop on the 22nd of August, he refers to the visit, and strongly expresses his admiration of Miss Lesley. It is interesting to remark that, in 1791, he, on a suggestion by Miss Lesley, made an alteration in the closing lines of his "Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn." In the Library edition of Burns's Works, vol. vi. p. 79, is printed an undated letter of the Poet to Miss Lesley, ascribed to May 1793, which contains warm expressions of his regard. In June 1799 Miss Lesley Baillie married Robert Cumming, Esq., of Logie.

ELLISON BEGBIE.—This young woman, the subject of two of the Poet's songs, entitled, "The Lass of Cessnock Banks," and "Bonny Peggy Alison," both composed when he was in his twenty-second year, was daughter of a small farmer in the parish of Galston, and was some time a domestic servant with a family who lived near the Cessnock stream. Besides celebrating her in song, Burns addressed to her five letters in prose, warmly testifying his affection, and offering marriage. On receiving her declination, he was for a time much dejected.

REV. WILLIAM BOYD.—This reverend gentleman is named by Burns in the "Ordination." Presented to the Church living of Fenwick in 1780, his admission was strongly opposed by the parishioners, who barricaded the church door to prevent his settlement. By order of the General Assembly, he was ordained to the charge at Irvine in 1782. Mr. Boyd died on the 17th October 1828, in his eighty-first year. He was a pronounced member of the "New Light" party.

HUGH BROWN.—The miller in the poem of "Tam o' Shanter," Hugh Brown was tenant of Ardlochan Mill, near Shanter farm. Son of William Brown, tenant at Jamestoun, in the parish of Kirkoswald, he was baptized on the 25th September 1720. Hugh Brown remained unmarried. He was related to the Poet maternally.

RICHARD BROWN.—According to the parish register, Richard Brown was son of William Brown and Jane Whinie, spouses, and was born at Irvine on the 2nd June 1753. To his early acquaintance with this person the Poet refers in his biographical letter to Dr. Moore. After informing his correspondent of the unfortunate issue of his attempt to establish himself as a flaxdresser at Irvine, he alludes to his there forming the intimacy of Richard Brown.

From this adventure [he writes] I learned something of a town life; but the principal thing which gave my mind a turn was a friendship I formed with a young fellow, a very noble character, but a helpless son of misfortune. He was the son of a simple mechanic; but a great man in the neighbourhood, taking him under his patronage, gave him a genteel education, with a view of bettering his situation in life. The patron dying just as he was ready to launch out into the world, the poor fellow, in despair, went to sea, where, after a variety of good and ill fortune, a little before I was acquainted with him, he had been set on shore by an American privateer on the wild coast of Connaught, stripped of everything. I cannot give this poor fellow's story without adding that he is at this time master of a large West Indiaman, belonging to the Thames. His mind was fraught with independence, magnanimity, and every manly virtue. I loved and admired him to a degree of enthusiasm, and of course strove to imitate him. In some measure I succeeded. I had pride before, but he taught it to flow in proper channels. His knowledge of the world was vastly superior to mine, and I was all attention to learn. He was the only man I ever saw who was a greater fool than myself where woman was the presiding star; but he spoke of illicit love with the levity of a sailor, which hitherto I had regarded with horror. Here his friendship did me a mischief, and the consequence was, that soon after I resumed the plough, I wrote the "Poet's Welcome."

At the time he became acquainted with Richard Brown, the Poet was in his twenty-third year. To Brown he afterwards addressed letters at intervals, and of these seven have been included in his correspondence. In his first letter, dated at Edinburgh, 13th December 1787, he commences thus:—

MY DEAR SIR,—I have met with few things in life which have given me more pleasure than Fortune's kindness to you since those days in which we met in the vale of misery; as I can honestly say that I never knew a man who more truly deserved it, or to whom my heart more truly wished it. I have been much indebted since that time to your story and sentiments for steeling my mind against evils, of which I have had a pretty decent share. My Will-o'-wisp fate you know: do you recollect a Sunday we spent together in Eglinton Woods? You told me, on my repeating some verses to you, that you wondered I could resist the temptation of sending verses of such merit to a magazine. It was from this remark I derived that idea of my own pieces, which encouraged me to endeavour at the character of a poet.

In a letter to Mr. Brown, dated Ellisland, 4th November 1789, the Poet writes,—“You are the earliest friend I now have on earth, my brothers excepted, and is not that an endearing circumstance?” The Bard then invokes the Divine blessing on his friend, his wife, and children.

MRS. CATHERINE BRUCE.—During the Poet's visit to Harvieston in the autumn of 1787, he, in company with his fellow-traveller, Dr. Adair, visited Mrs. Bruce of Clackmannan. By Dr. Adair an account of the visit is presented in these words:—

A visit to Mrs. Bruce of Clackmannan, a lady above ninety, the lineal descendant of that race which gave the Scottish throne its brightest ornament, interested his feelings more powerfully [than the sight of the romantic scenery of Glendevon, which he had just been visiting]. This venerable dame, with characteristic dignity, informed me, on my observing that I believed she was descended from the family of Robert Bruce, that Robert Bruce was sprung from her family. Though almost deprived of speech by a paralytic affection, she preserved her hospitality and urbanity. She was in possession of the hero's helmet and two-handed sword, with which she conferred on Burns and myself the honour of knighthood, remarking that she had a better right to confer that title than *some people*. You will, of course, conclude that the old lady's political tenets were as Jacobitical as the Poet's, a conformity which contributed not a little to the cordiality of our reception and entertainment. She gave as her first toast after dinner, *Awa Uncos*, or, “Away with the Strangers.” Who these strangers were you will readily understand. Mrs. A. [Charlotte Hamilton] corrects me by saying it should be *Hooi*, or *Hooi Uncos*, a sound used by shepherds to direct their dogs to drive away the sheep.

Mrs. Bruce was daughter of Alexander Bruce, of the family of Newton, and early in life became the wife of Henry Bruce, Esq., of Clackmannan, chief of the family. Her lineage has been traced to Sir Robert Bruce, whom David II., in bestowing upon him the lands of Clackmannan, describes in the charter as his cousin. Mr. Henry Bruce of Clackmannan died on the 8th July 1772, so that Mrs. Bruce, when the Poet visited her, was in the fifteenth year of her widowhood. By John Ramsay of Ochtertyre she is thus described:—

With a very moderate income, she has, for many years—both in her husband's time and in her widowhood—seen a great deal of good company in her house, besides giving plentifully to her indigent neighbours. Her plain, hearty meals, seasoned with kindness and care, are more pleasing to a sentimental guest than the studied refinements of the vain and luxurious. She never changed her fashions, but adhered strictly to the maxims and economics that prevailed in her younger days; and in her house there is no waste, nor any of those modish innovations which straiten other people, without having any show. When on the borders of fourscore she used to rise at six in the morning to see that everything was in order.¹

Subsequent to her husband's death, Mrs. Bruce continued to reside in the old tower of the family, situated on an eminence at the west end of the town of Clackmannan. There she died on the 4th November 1791, at the age of ninety-five. She bequeathed the sword and helmet, which she believed to have belonged to King Robert, to the Earl of Elgin.

DAVID, ELEVENTH EARL OF BUCHAN.—This energetic and patriotic, but, withal, eccentric nobleman, was born on the 1st June 1742, and succeeded to the title in 1767. Devoted to literary and artistic pursuits, also to archaeological inquiries, he in 1780 became the founder of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries. Shortly after Burns's arrival in Edinburgh in November 1786, Lord Buchan formed his acquaintance, and soon afterwards communicated to him a letter of counsel. His letter, dated 1st February 1787, is now exhibited in the Poet's monument at Edinburgh. In acknowledging his Lordship's communication, Burns, in a letter dated the 3rd February, uses these words: "Your Lordship touches the darling chord of my heart, when you advise me to fire my muse at Scottish story and Scottish scenes." During the summer of 1791, Lord Buchan erected at

¹ *Scotland and Scotsmen*, from the MSS. of John Ramsay, Esq., of Ochtertyre. Edinburgh, 1888, vol. ii. p. 106.

Ednam, near Kelso, a monument to James Thomson, author of "The Seasons," which included a bust of that poet. The bust he proposed to crown with laurel at a public ceremonial to be held on the 11th September, the anniversary of Thomson's birth, and he invited the Ayrshire Bard to give attendance, and to prepare for the occasion a suitable ode. Burns excused himself for not attending, on account of his being engaged with his harvest, but sent to his Lordship his "Address to the Shade of Thomson," which has since been included in his works. The Poet transmitted to Lord Buchan in January 1794 a copy of his ode, "Bruce's Address at Bannockburn." When, on the 15th October 1814, the Earl unveiled his colossal statue of Wallace, on the bank of the Tweed near Dryburgh, he at the same time crowned a bust of Burns at its base, expressing on the occasion twelve lines of verse he had composed in honour of the Poet's memory. He died on the 20th April 1829. Vain and self-opinionative, Lord Buchan was considerably gifted, and was much esteemed for his amiable qualities.

ELIZABETH BURNET.—This gentlewoman, the youngest daughter of James Burnet, Lord Mouboddo, is by the Poet celebrated as "Fair Burnet," in his "Address to Edinburgh," and is also the subject of his elegy commencing, "Life ne'er exulted in so rich a prize." Miss Elizabeth Burnet died of a pulmonary ailment on the 17th June 1790. In transmitting to William Chalmers of Ayr his "Address to Edinburgh," the Poet remarks, in reference to Miss Burnet, "There has not been anything nearly like her in all the combinations of beauty, grace, and goodness the great Creator has formed since Milton's Eve on the first day of her existence."

WILLIAM CHALMERS.—A writer and notary-public in Ayr, this gentleman is described by the Poet as "a particular friend." On the 24th June 1786 Mr. Chalmers executed the notarial intimation of the assignation of his property in favour of his brother Gilbert, and on this occasion asked the Poet to recommend him in verse to a young lady to whom he was attached, and whom the Poet had met. Burns complied by composing the song, beginning "Wi' braw new branks in mickle pride." In a mandate, whimsically drawn in the form of a public writ, and dated the 20th November 1786, he charged Mr. Chalmers to superintend the burning of a song he enclosed to him, as being unsuited for public inspection. In a letter to Mr. Chalmers, dated 27th December 1786, the Poet commences: "My Dear Friend," and protests that, "of all men living," he had intended to have

sent him "an entertaining letter;" he enclosed for him two of his recent poems.

STEPHEN CLARKE.—A teacher of music, and the organist of the Episcopal chapel in the Cowgate, Edinburgh, Mr. Clarke published, about the year 1790, a small work, entitled "Two Sonatas for the Pianoforte or Harpsichord, in which are introduced favourite Scotch Airs." The work was dedicated to Mrs. Erskine, junior, of Mar. Mr. Clarke was employed by Johnson in arranging the airs for the *Scots Musical Museum*. In this connexion he became known to the Poet, who, impressed with his abilities as a musician, warmly interested himself in his professional advancement. At the Poet's recommendation he was some time employed as a musical instructor by Mr. M'Murdo at Drumlanrig, also by Mr. Miller at Dalswinton. In a letter to Mr. George Thomson, dated 6th February 1795, the Poet writes: "I am confident that Clarke is equal in Scottish song to take up the pen after Pleyel." Mr. Clarke died at Edinburgh on the 6th August 1797. In his offices he was succeeded by his son, William, who also rendered service to Johnson in harmonizing the airs for the concluding volume of the *Museum*.

LADY WINIFRED MAXWELL CONSTABLE.—This gentlewoman seems to have become known to the Poet through the family of Mr. Miller of Dalswinton. In a letter to Lady Winifred, dated at Ellisland, the 16th December 1789, the Poet remarks that her ladyship's progenitors and his own had been "common sufferers in a cause where even to be unfortunate is glorious, the cause of heroic loyalty." And with his letter he enclosed a copy of the verses which he had inscribed two years previously to William Tytler of Woodhouselee, beginning, "Revered defender of the beauteous Stuart." Lady Winifred was grand-daughter and representative of that Earl of Nithsdale who, in 1716, was, through the fortitude and ingenuity of his wife, rescued from the Tower, while under sentence of death. Her ladyship had returned to Scotland after a lengthened absence, and was rebuilding Terregles House, the seat of her ancestors. She had married William Haggerston Constable of Everingham. At Terregles House the Poet became an occasional visitor. In April 1791 he transmitted to Lady Winifred his "Lament of Mary Queen of Scots," and in the same year composed for her special gratification his song entitled, "Ye Jacobites by Name." A song in two stanzas entitled, "Nithsdale's Welcome Hame," he, about the same time, composed in her ladyship's honour.

WILLIAM CUNNINGHAME OF ANNBANK AND ENTERKIN.—This gentleman is the subject of the stanzas by the Poet celebrating the “Fête Champêtre” or open-air festival, which he gave, in 1788, on attaining his majority and entering into possession of his grandfather’s estates. Mr. Cunninghame married, 18th June 1794, Catherine, daughter of Major Alexander Stewart of Afton, and of the union was born an only son, William Allason Cunninghame of Logan and Afton (Library edition of Burns’s Works, ii. p. 164).

MISS DEBORAH D. DAVIES.—In honour of this lady Burns composed two songs, one beginning, “Bonnie wee thing, cannie wee thing,” the other entitled, “The charms of lovely Davies,” also an epigram beginning, “Ask why God made the gem so small.” Miss Davies was a relative of the Riddel family, and the Poet formed her acquaintance when he was resident at Ellisland. According to Allan Cunningham, who received his information from her nephew, Miss Davies was of short stature, but of exquisite form and beauty, and possessed more than an ordinary share of mental endowments. A Captain Delany, by composing verses in her praise, and other attentions, secured her affection, but, after making to her a promise of marriage, suddenly deserted her. To her cruel wrong Miss Davies succumbed, and after her death some striking and pathetic verses she had composed, were found wrapped round the miniature of her ungrateful lover. Two letters addressed by the Poet to Miss Davies, undated, but supposed to have been written in August 1791, are included in the Bard’s correspondence; and in the Library edition of his works (vol. vi. p. 64) is presented a letter addressed by Miss Davies to the Poet, on the 14th March 1793, in which she begs that he will supply her with a copy of his song, “The charms of lovely Davies,” in his own handwriting.

GEORGE DEMPSTER.—By the Poet in his “Epistle to James Smith” Mr. Dempster is thus celebrated, “A title Dempster merits it.” Mr. Dempster was born in 1735, and in 1762 was elected member of Parliament for the Fife and Forfar district of burghs. From the independence with which he asserted his opinions, he was popularly known as “Honest George.” Retiring from Parliament in 1790, he thereafter devoted his energies towards the promotion of manufactures and the advancement of agriculture. Mr. Dempster died at his residence at Dunnichen, Forfarshire, on the 13th February 1818.

JOHN DOVE, called facetiously by the Poet "Johnie Pigeon," was landlord of the Whitefoord Arms Inn in the Cowgate of Mauchline. It is supposed by Mr. Scott Douglas (Library edition of Burns's Works, i. p. 163) that he was the "Paisley John" of another of the Poet's compositions, implying that he hailed from that town. In 1785 the Poet was a member of a Bachelors' Club which met at the Whitefoord Arms.

THE REV. DR. ROBERT DUNCAN, minister of Dundonald, is, in "The Twa Herds," described by the Poet as "Duncan deep." He was ordained minister of Dundonald in 1783, and died on the 14th April 1815, in the thirty-second year of his ministry. He was author of a sermon on infidelity.

ARCHIBALD, ELEVENTH EARL OF EGLINTON.—By this nobleman the sum of ten pounds was sent to the Poet shortly after his arrival in Edinburgh. The Poet acknowledged the gift in a letter which he addressed to his lordship on the 11th January 1787. In this letter he writes:—

Your munificence, my lord, certainly deserves my very grateful acknowledgments; but your patronage is a bounty peculiarly suited to my feelings. I am not master enough of the etiquette of life to know whether there be not some impropriety in troubling your lordship with my thanks, but my heart whispered me to do it. From the emotions of my inmost soul I do it. Selfish ingratitude I hope I am incapable of; and mercenary servility, I trust I shall ever have as much honest pride as to detest.

Before succeeding to the title, in 1769, the Earl was known as General Montgomerie. He raised the 77th Regiment of Foot, of which he was, in January 1757, appointed lieutenant-colonel commandant. He was elected M.P. for Ayrshire. In 1776 his lordship was chosen one of the sixteen Scottish representative Peers, and in 1782 he was appointed governor of Edinburgh Castle. He died on the 30th October 1796.

THE HON. HENRY ERSKINE.—At a meeting of the Canongate Kilwinning Lodge of Freemasons, held on the 7th December 1786, Burns was, by Mr. Dalrymple of Orangefield, introduced to Henry Erskine as the Past-Master. From this time Mr. Erskine took a deep interest in his concerns, and afterwards became his correspondent. In his "Extempore in the Court

of Session" he humorously refers to Mr. Erskine's pleading in these lines:—

Collected Harry stood awee,
 Then open'd out his arm, man ;
 His lordship sat wi' ruefu' e'e,
 And ey'd the gathering storm, man :
 Like wind-driv'n hail it did assail,
 Or torrents owre a lin, man ;
 The Bench sae wise lift up their eyes,
 Half-waukened wi' the din, man.

In a letter dated Ellisland, 22nd January 1789, the Poet enclosed to Mr. Erskine several of his recent compositions, with an expression of his gratitude for the kindness he had received from him. Second son of Henry David, tenth Earl of Buchan, Mr. Erskine was born on the 1st November 1746. Admitted advocate in 1768, he was elected Dean of Faculty in 1786. He held office as Lord Advocate in 1783, and again in 1806–7. He died on the 8th October 1817. A noted humorist, Mr. Erskine was also distinguished as a powerful pleader, a skilful lawyer, and a generous friend.

JANE FERRIER.—This gentlewoman, to whom the Poet enclosed his "Elegy on Sir James Hunter Blair," with the verses commencing, "Nae heathen name shall I prefix," was eldest daughter of James Ferrier, Writer to the Signet, and sister of Miss Susan Edmonstone Ferrier, the accomplished novelist. Miss Ferrier was born in 1767, and was, when the Poet formed her acquaintance in 1787, celebrated as a beauty. She married, in 1804, General Samuel Graham, subsequently deputy-governor of Stirling Castle; and, being an accomplished artist, she, along with the ingenious Mr. Edward Blore, made drawings of the oak carvings in Stirling Palace, which, being engraved, were published in 1817 in a volume entitled *Lacunar Strivilinense*. Mrs. Graham died at Edinburgh in 1846; her remains rest in St. Cuthbert's Churchyard.

AGNES FLEMING.—Daughter of John Fleming, farmer at Doura, in the parish of Tarbolton, Agnes Fleming was baptized on the 19th March 1765 (parish register); she is the heroine of the Poet's song entitled, "My Nannie, O," and beginning, "Behind yon hills where Lugar flows." The song was composed in 1783.

CHRISTIAN FLINT.—Mrs. Flint, better known by her maiden name of

Kirstie Kirkpatrick, was wife of a mason in the parish of Closeburn. According to Dr. Robert Chambers, the Poet, when he lived at Ellisland, was in the habit of paying Kirstie a visit, that he might hear her sing his recent songs. When, in course of her singing, he found any word harsh or grating to his ear, he substituted one more melodious and pleasing. Mrs. Flint died in 1836, at the age of seventy-one.

MISS FONTENELLE.—This lady was one of Mr. Sutherland's company in Dumfries theatre. She is described as a "pretty little creature," and by her skilful performances she attracted the admiration of the Poet, who provided three compositions for her use. Of these, the first, entitled "The Rights of Woman," Miss Fontenelle expressed on her benefit night, 26th November 1792; the second is an epigram, beginning, "Sweet naïveté of feature;" the third, an address, which Miss Fontenelle spoke at her benefit on the 4th December 1793. In transmitting to Miss Fontenelle the first of these compositions, the Poet writes:—

To you, madam, on our humble Dumfries boards, I have been more indebted for entertainment than ever I was in prouder theatres. Your charms as a woman would insure applause to the most indifferent actress, and your theatrical talents would insure admiration to the plainest figure. This, madam, is not the unmeaning or insidious compliment of the frivolous or interested; I pay it from the same honest impulse that the sublime of Nature excites my admiration or her beauties give me delight.

REV. ALEXANDER GEDDES, LL.D.—Son of a crofter in the parish of Rathven, Banffshire, Alexander Geddes was born in 1737, and educated for the ministry of the Romish Church. In 1764 he officiated as Roman Catholic priest at Dundee, and after some time acting as tutor in the family of the Earl of Traquair, he resumed the clerical duties at Auchinalrig in Banffshire. Associating on familiar terms with the Protestant clergy, he was, in 1779, suspended by his diocesan; at the same time he received the degree of LL.D. from the University of Aberdeen. In 1780 he proceeded to London, where, obtaining the favour of Lord Petre, he received a pension from that nobleman, and was enabled to engage in various literary concerns. During a visit to Edinburgh, in the winter of 1786–87, he met Burns in the house of Lord Monboddo, and at once became interested on his behalf. He procured as subscribers for the Poet's Edinburgh edition the names of five foreign Romish seminaries. Mrs. M'Lehose, who met Dr. Geddes at Edinburgh, was much struck by his powerful conversation, and the Poet, in his

letter to Mrs. Dunlop, of the 4th November 1787, warmly commends him. In a letter to Dr. Geddes, written from Ellisland, 3rd February 1789, he reports the event of his marriage, and that he had become a farmer and officer of Excise; he also entreats a continuation of his correspondent's friendship. Dr. Geddes published in 1792-97, in two large quarto volumes, a translation of the Bible, accompanied with comments, in which he denied the plenary inspiration. His work was accordingly prohibited by the Vicars Apostolic of his own Church, while by members of other denominations he was severely criticized. Among many other works, chiefly controversial, he published "Linton," a pastoral poem; and from his pen proceeded the popular songs, "There was a wee bit wifkie," and "O send Lewie Gordon home." He died at London on the 26th February 1802. Though of eccentric modes and unsound opinions, Dr. Geddes was much esteemed as an accomplished scholar.

JOHN GOLDIE, celebrated by the Poet in his epistle beginning, "O Gowdie, terror of the Whigs," was a person of considerable ingenuity and merit. Son of the miller at Craigmill, on the Water of Cessnock, in the parish of Galston, he was there born in 1717. Not being sent to school, he was at home educated by his mother, while he personally acquired the art of figuring. Possessing a remarkable mechanical skill, he in his fourteenth year prepared a miniature mill, capable of use. He afterwards studied architecture, and entered upon business at Kilmarnock as a cabinetmaker. At this period he fashioned a beautiful clock-case, which was acquired by the Duke of Hamilton and deposited in Hamilton Palace. Mr. Goldie next entered into business at Kilmarnock as a wine merchant, occupying his leisure in mathematical and astronomical studies. Ultimately he became notable in connexion with his religious opinions. In 1780 he published, in three octavo volumes, a work entitled, *Essays on various important Subjects, Moral and Divine, being an attempt to distinguish True from False Religion*. In this work he set forth the existence of God, but repudiated almost every other doctrine of orthodox belief. Consequent on his publication, which became popularly known as "Goudie's Bible," he fell into much disrepute. Chancing to be in the neighbourhood of Mauchline, he waited on the Poet at Mossiel, and, inviting him to visit him at Kilmarnock, encouraged him to venture on a publication. He does not further appear in connexion with the Poet's history. In 1808 he published a work entitled, *Conclusive Evidence against Atheism*, intimating at the end of the volume his intention

to produce a work in three volumes to be entitled, *A Revise, or a Reform of the Present History of Astronomy*, but this publication was not forthcoming. He died in 1811. Latterly Mr. Goldie engaged in mining speculations, and thereby impaired his resources.

CAPTAIN JOHN HAMILTON.—This gentleman was owner of the house occupied by the Poet during the first eighteen months of his residence in Dumfries. In a letter to Captain Hamilton, without date, but ascribed to July 1794 (printed by Dr. Hatley Waddell in 1879), the Poet remarks that he is "the only person in Dumfries, or in the world, to whom he is in debt," and makes promise of settling with him soon. He ascribed his indebtedness to the fact of his having "lent his name to a friend who had become unfortunate," and to his "having to pay out of his very limited income, a sum he could ill afford." To the Captain he made payment of an instalment of three guineas in January 1795, when he received an acknowledgment, in which the writer uses these words:—

When you first came here I courted your acquaintance ; I wished to see you ; I asked you to call in and take a family dinner now and then, when it suited your convenience. For more than twelve months you have never entered my door, but seemed rather shy when we met. This kept me from sending you any further particular invitation. If I have in any shape offended, or from inadvertency hurt the delicacy of your feelings, tell me so, and I will endeavour to set it to rights. If you are disposed to renew our acquaintance, I will be glad to see you to a family dinner, at three o'clock on Sunday, and at any rate hope you will believe me, dear sir, your sincere friend.

To this polite communication Burns replied on Saturday, 14th February, explaining that he had been from home, and assuring his friend that his "backwardness" had arisen, "not from his taking offence," but "from the abashing consciousness of his obscure station in the ranks of life." He then promised that on the first leisure evening he would avail himself of his friend's offer of hospitality.

PATRICK HERON OF HERON AND KERROUGHTREE.—By the death of General Stewart, the Parliamentary representation of the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright became vacant in January 1795, and during the two following months a contest for the election caused much local excitement. The Tory candidate, Mr. Thomas Gordon of Balmaghie, was brought forward under the influence of his uncle, Mr. Murray of Broughton, and was also assisted by the Earl of Galloway. On the Whig side appeared Mr. Heron,

and the Poet warmly supported his candidature by composing two ballads on his behalf, and circulating printed copies of them among the constituency. Mr. Heron was elected, but in the following year the Parliament was dissolved, which brought on a new contest. Though in very feeble health, Burns produced a ballad, bitterly assailing Mr. Heron's opponents, but he did not survive to learn the result of the election, which issued in Mr. Heron's favour. In 1802 Mr. Heron was again returned member for the Stewartry, but on the 10th May 1803 his name was erased by order of the House. Mr. Heron married, at La Mancha, 18th December 1775, Lady Elizabeth Cochrane, daughter of Thomas, eighth Earl of Dundonald. He died at Grantham on the 9th June 1803.

JAMES HUMPHRY. — According to the parish register of Tarbolton, William Humphry had a son baptized on the 27th November 1755, called James. The child so baptized is supposed to be the subject of the Poet's epitaph beginning, "Below thir stanes lie Jamie's banes." By trade a stone-mason, James Humphry was employed both at Lochlea and Mossiel, and his knowledge of books and facility of utterance early recommended him to the Poet's attention. But Humphry began to engage in polemical discussions, with an affectation of learning beyond what he actually possessed; hence the Poet's description of him as "a bletherin' bitch." After industriously exercising his calling for many years, he in his advanced age found a home at Failford, in one of the almshouses there constructed for the aged destitute. He died in 1844, at the age of eighty-nine. Humphry rejoiced in being the subject of the Poet's Muse.

JEAN JAFFRAY.—The heroine of Burns's exquisite song beginning, "I gaed a waefu' gate yestreen," Jean Jaffray was the only daughter of the Rev. Andrew Jaffray, successively minister of the parishes of Ruthwell and Lochmaben. She was born in the manse of Ruthwell, on the 29th May 1773.¹ In 1794 she married — Renwick, merchant, Liverpool, who afterwards settled in New York. There Mrs. Renwick's society was much cherished by Washington Irving and other literary persons. She died in October 1850. Subsequent to her death a collected volume of her writings was issued, accompanied by a memoir. Her son, James Renwick, LL.D., became Professor of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry in Columbia College, and was the author of many scientific publications. When in 1789

¹ Ruthwell Parish Register.

Burns composed his song in honour of Miss Jaffray, she was in her sixteenth year.

JEAN KENNEDY.—The “Kirkton Jean” of “Tam o’ Shanter,” Jean Kennedy kept a small inn at the Kirk-town of Kirkoswald. Jean was one of the two daughters of Alexander Kennedy in Crossraguel, where she was born in August 1738. In the management of the hostelry she was assisted by her younger sister, Anne. The sisters occupied a fair social status; they enjoyed an unblemished fame, and were usually described as “the Leddies.” Their inn was usually known as “the Leddies’ House;” but the Poet, to suit the exigencies of verse, has described it as “*the Lord’s House.*”

HELEN KIRKPATRICK.—Daughter of a blacksmith in the vicinity of Mount Oliphant, Helen Kirkpatrick attracted the Poet’s fancy in the harvest-field in the autumn of 1773, and became the subject of his song entitled “Handsome Nell,” and commencing, “Oh, once I lov’d a bonnie lass.” Burns afterwards contributed the song to the *Scots Musical Museum*.

DAVID M’CULLOCH OF ARDWELL.—This gentleman, whose estate lay near Gatehouse in Kirkcudbrightshire, was a warm friend of the Poet. In connexion with the Poet, an affecting anecdote was related by him to Mr. J. G. Lockhart. Riding into Dumfries to attend a county ball in the summer of 1794 (apparently on the King’s birthday, being the 4th June), he saw Burns walking alone on the shady side of the High Street, while fashionable groups of ladies and gentlemen were on the opposite side, passing along to share the festivities of the night, but not one of whom seemed disposed to recognise him. Noticing the circumstance, Mr. M’Culloch dismounted from his horse, and, addressing the Poet, proposed that he should cross the street. “Nay, nay, my young friend, that’s all over now,” replied the Bard, while, after a slight pause, he quoted these two verses of Lady Grizel Baillie’s touching ballad:—

His bonnet stood ance fu’ fair on his brow,
His auld ane looked better than mony ane’s new;
But now he lets wear ony gate it will hing,
And casts himsel’ dowie upon the corn-bing.

Oh, were we young as we ance hae been,
We sud hae been galloping down on yon green,
And linking it owre the lily-white lea;
And werena my heart light I wad dee!

On the 21st of June, or about two weeks after this occurrence, the Poet, in a short letter, intimated to Mr. M'Culloch that he was about to visit his neighbourhood, and desired the favour of his accompanying him and Mr. Syme to Mr. Heron's residence at Kerroughtree.

REV. WILLIAM M'GILL, D.D.—This reverend gentleman was educated at the University of Glasgow, and, being licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Wigtown in 1759, was in the following year appointed assistant to the minister of Kilwinning. In October 1761 he was ordained minister of the second charge of Ayr. In 1786 he published a work entitled *A Practical Essay on the Death of Jesus Christ, in two parts; containing first the History, and then the Doctrine of His Death*. Dr. M'Gill's essay was supposed to inculcate Arian and Socinian doctrines, and consequently called forth severe censures. But the writer remained silent till his neighbour, Dr. William Peebles of Newton-upon-Ayr, in a sermon preached on the 5th November 1788, denounced the composition as heretical, and charged the author as with one hand receiving the privileges of the Church, while with the other he was endeavouring to plunge a dagger into her heart. Dr. M'Gill published a defence, and in May 1789 an inquiry into the case by the local Presbytery was ordered by the General Assembly. The subject excited much general interest, and led the Poet, in the interest of the accused, to compose his satire of "The Kirk's Alarm." After various proceedings, Dr. M'Gill, on the 14th April 1790, offered to the Provincial Synod certain explanations, which were unanimously accepted by the court. Dr. M'Gill died on the 30th March 1807, in his seventy-sixth year. Of mild and agreeable manners and an equable temper, he was much beloved by his friends; he also excelled as a humorist.

HENRY MACKENZIE.—A distinguished novelist and miscellaneous writer, Henry Mackenzie was the son of a physician at Edinburgh, and was there born in August 1745. Devoting himself to legal pursuits, he became partner and afterwards successor of Mr. Inglis, attorney for the Crown. In 1771 he published anonymously *The Man of Feeling*, which at once became popular. With his name he issued in 1773 *The Man of the World*, which he followed in 1777 by his tragic tale of *Julia de Roubigné*. In January 1779 he became editor of *The Mirror*; and of the one hundred and ten papers to which this serial extended, he personally contributed forty-two. *The Lounger*, another serial under his editorship, was commenced in

1785; and of the hundred and one papers which it includes, he composed fifty-seven. In *The Lounger*, on the 9th December 1786, appeared from his pen a commendatory article on Burns's Kilmarnock volume, which most materially tended to the Poet's recognition by the *savants* of the capital. Towards the Poet he extended much personal attention, especially in making him known to his literary and other friends. When the Poet proceeded on his Highland tour in company with Mr. Nicol in 1787, he received from Mr. Mackenzie a letter of introduction to his brother-in-law, Sir James Grant, Bart., of Castle Grant. This letter has lately been printed by Sir William Fraser in his *Chiefs of Grant*. It proceeds thus:—

EDINBURGH, 24th August 1787.

MY DEAR SIR JAMES,—This will be delivered by the Bard of Airshire, Mr. Burns, of whom you have heard a good deal, and with whom Louis¹ was acquainted here. He is also charged with a box directed for Miss Grant, I presume Miss Eliza, which came some time ago in the English stage coach, and was omitted to be sent by M'Laren. It consists of such light materials as Poets sometimes present ladies with. Mr. Burns is accompanied in his Northern Tour by Mr. Nicol, with whom I have not the honor of being acquainted; but Louis, I presume, has a very feeling remembrance of him. You will find Burns not less uncommon in conversation than in his poetry, clever, intelligent, and observant, with remarkable acuteness and independence of mind,—the last indeed to a degree that sometimes prejudices people against him, tho' he has, on the whole, met with amazing patronage and encouragement. Louis will show him the lions of Castle Grant; and as he is an enthusiast about the "fortia facta patrum," let him not forget, as in the case of Lord Monboddo, to show him the large *Gun*.

Penie² still holds out, and is very well settled in Brown Square, whither we removed immediately after dinner on the day you set out. We hope you have by this time finished your journey successfully and found all well at home. Our love to all.—Yours most affectionately,

HENRY MACKENZIE.

By favour of Mr. Burns.

In his letter addressed to his brother Gilbert, from Edinburgh, 17th September 1787, the Poet refers to his visit to Sir James Grant at Castle Grant; he also notices the event in his Journal.

In 1804 Henry Mackenzie was appointed Comptroller of Taxes for Scotland. He died on the 14th January 1831, at the advanced age of eighty-six.

¹ Mr. Mackenzie's son, a youth of great promise, died in 1801.

² Penuel Grant, Henry Mackenzie's wife.

He married her on 6th January 1776. She was daughter of Sir Ludovick Grant of Grant, and sister of Sir James.

REV. JAMES MACKINLAY, D.D.—On the admission of Mr. Mackinlay to the second charge of Kilmarnock, Burns composed his poem entitled “The Ordination.” Mr. Mackinlay cherished Old Light views, and to gratify those of the opposite school the Poet wrote. Mr. Mackinlay was born at Douglas in 1756, and, becoming a licentiate of the Church in 1782, was presented by the Earl of Glencairn to the second charge of Kilmarnock, his ordination taking place on the 6th April 1786. In 1809 he was translated to the first charge. He died on the 10th February 1841, in the fifty-fifth year of his ministry. Dr. Mackinlay was author of several discourses, printed singly. His son James was minister of Wellpark Church, Glasgow, and died in 1876.

ISABELLA M'LEOD OF RAASAY.—To this gentlewoman the Poet addressed his verses beginning, “Sad thy tale, thou idle page,” composed on the death of her brother John, who died in July 1787. With the M'Leod family he became acquainted on the introduction of Mr. Gavin Hamilton. Flora, an elder sister of Isabella, married, in 1779, Colonel James Mure-Campbell of Rowallan, who, in 1782, succeeded to the Earldom of Loudoun. She died on the 3rd September 1780, soon after giving birth to an only child, Flora, who, on the death of her father in 1786, became Countess of Loudoun in her sixth year. Subsequently the Poet, in allusion to Miss M'Leod's grief at the loss of relatives, composed his song beginning, “Raving winds around her blowing.”

REV. WILLIAM M'QUHAE, D.D.—This reverend gentleman is referred to humorously in “The Twa Herds.” Born at Wigtown in 1737, and educated at the University of Glasgow, he was ordained minister at St. Quivox in 1764. In 1806 he was proposed as Moderator of the General Assembly, but declined the office. He died on the 1st March 1823, in the sixtieth year of his ministry. Much celebrated as a sound expositor of Divine truth, Dr. M'Quhae was also distinguished for his business aptitude and intelligent conversation. In 1785 he published a discourse entitled *The Difficulties which attend the Practice of Religion, no Just Argument against it.*

REV. ALEXANDER MILLER.—In “The Holy Fair” this gentleman is keenly satirized. A probationer when, in 1786, Burns reflected upon him, he was, in 1788, presented to the parish of Kilmaurs, but his settlement was keenly opposed by the parishioners. He died on the 22nd December

1804. According to Burns, he professed evangelical doctrine, but was at heart of the opposite school.

JOHN MITCHELL, DUMFRIES.—Mr. Mitchell, Collector of Excise at Dumfries, was an attached friend of the Poet. He had obtained a college education, with a view to the ministry, and Burns frequently consulted him on poetical concerns. Two short letters addressed by him to Mr. Mitchell have latterly been included in his prose works (Library edition of Burns's Works, v. 328, 384). During his illness, at the close of 1795, he conveyed to Mr. Mitchell his request for a small loan in his verses beginning, "Friend of the Poet, tried and leal."

REV. ALEXANDER MOODIE.—By the Poet Mr. Moodie is celebrated in "The Holy Fair" and "The Twa Herds." Translated from the second charge of Culross, he was admitted to the pastoral charge of Riccarton in 1762. An earnest preacher of the evangelical or Old Light school, he was somewhat severe in his personal aspects—a peculiarity to which the Poet facetiously refers. He died at Riccarton on the 14th February 1799, in his seventy-second year. In his parochial charge he was succeeded by his eldest son.

EUPHEMIA MURRAY OF LINTROSE.—In honour of this lady, when she was about her eighteenth year, Burns, in 1787, composed his song with the chorus "Blythe, blythe, and merry was she." A cousin of Sir William Murray of Ochtertyre, Miss Murray became the wife of David Smythe of Methven, advocate, latterly a Judge in the Court of Session, with the title of Lord Methven. Mrs. Smythe was in youth celebrated as a beauty; she was known as the "Flower of Strathmore."

REV. JOHN MUTRIE.—Predecessor of the Rev. James Mackinlay, Mr. Mutrie held office as minister of the second charge of Kilmarnock from 1775 till his death, on the 2nd June 1785. Of the New Light school, he is mentioned by Burns in "The Ordination."

REV. JAMES OLIPHANT.—This reverend gentleman was promoted from the Gorbals Chapel of Ease to the High Church of Kilmarnock in 1764, and there ministered till 1773, when he was translated to the parish of Dunbarton. He died on the 10th April 1818, at the age of eighty-four.

He had a powerful voice, and so is described by the Poet in connexion with his church at Kilmarnock as having "made her yell." Mr. Oliphant composed *A Mother's Catechism*, also *A Sacramental Catechism*, both of which obtained wide acceptance.

MRS. LUCY OSWALD.—This lady, a daughter of Wynne Johnston, Esq., of Hilton, was married, about the year 1793, to Richard A. Oswald, Esq., of Auchincruive, who then resided in Dumfries. Mrs. Oswald was a celebrated beauty, and the Poet transferred to her, as a tributary offering, his song beginning "O wat ye wha's in yon town," originally composed in honour of Jean Lorimer. Mrs. Oswald died of a pulmonary affection in January 1798, about the age of thirty (Library edition of Burns's Works, iii. 253).

REV. WILLIAM PEEBLES, D.D.—Minister of Newton-on-Ayr, Dr. Peebles is satirized by the Poet in "The Holy Fair" and "The Kirk's Alarm." He ministered at Newton-on-Ayr from 1778 till his death, which took place on the 11th October 1826. In 1803 he published a poem entitled "The Crisis; or, The Progress of Revolutionary Principles," and in 1810 a volume consisting chiefly of odes and elegies. He also issued a volume of sermons, and several single discourses.

REV. JOHN ROBERTSON.—Minister of the first charge at Kilmarnock, Mr. Robertson ministered in that town from 1765 till his death, which took place on the 5th June 1799. Mr. Robertson, who cherished New Light opinions, is the subject of a stanza in "The Ordination."

JEAN AND ANNE RONALD.—Daughters of William Ronald, farmer at Bennals, in the parish of Tarbolton, Jean Ronald was baptized on the 2nd October 1759, and Anne on the 26th June 1767 (Tarbolton Parish Register). The sisters are the subject of the Poet's song beginning, "In Tarbolton, ye ken, there are proper young men." Gilbert Burns wooed Jean, the elder sister, but, rejecting his addresses, she accepted the hand of John Reid, farmer at Langlands. The Poet, in his twenty-second year, was attracted by the younger sister, and celebrated her charms. Their father, William Ronald, experienced reverses.

MRS. ELIZABETH SCOTT, *née* RUTHERFORD, was niece of Mrs. Cockburn,

authoress of the popular song beginning "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling," and wife of — Scott, Wauchope House, Roxburghshire. In February 1787 Mrs. Scott sent the Poet a long poetical epistle, in which she made offer to send him "a marled plaid" in guerdon of her strong approval of his verses. Her address was acknowledged by the Poet in an epistle beginning, "I mind it weel in early date." In course of his Border tour Burns paid a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Scott at Wauchope, and in reference to the occasion made in his Journal the following entry:—

Mr. Scott exactly the figure and face commonly given to Sancho Panza—very shrewd in his farming matters, and not unfrequently stumbles on what may be called a strong thing, rather than a good thing. Mrs. Scott all the sense, taste, intrepidity of face, and bold, critical decision, which usually distinguish female authors.

In the same itinerary, the Poet subsequently alludes to Mrs. Scott's "consummate assurance of her own abilities," while, in the Journal of his Highland tour, he, under the 25th August 1787, alludes to "her strong sense and just remark." Mrs. Scott died on the 19th February 1789. In 1801 her collected poems were published by her relatives.

REV. ANDREW SHAW, D.D.—This reverend gentleman is alluded to by the Poet in "The Twa Herds." Son of Mr. Andrew Shaw, Professor of Divinity at St. Andrews, he was ordained minister of Craigie in 1765, and there ministered till his death, in September 1805. He was held in high esteem both as a preacher and an accomplished scholar.

REV. DAVID SHAW, D.D.—Named by the Poet in "The Twa Herds," Dr. David Shaw was minister of Coylton from 1749 till his death, which took place on the 26th April 1810. He died in his ninety-second year and the sixty-first of his ministry.

WILLIAM SLOAN.—The "Haverel Will" of Burns's poem of "Halloween," William Sloan was son of Robert Sloan in Douglaston, parish of Kirkoswald; he was there born in December 1758. On the recommendation of his uncle, Samuel Brown, the Poet employed him as his *gaudsman* or plough-guide when he entered on the lease of Mossiel. After being some time in the Poet's service, Sloan returned to Kirkoswald, and was there apprenticed to the shoemaking trade, under John Davidson—that is,

“Souter Johnnie.” He finally settled in the village of Dalnellington. Sloan was a person of simple manners, but by no means deficient in shrewdness and sagacity.

REV. GEORGE SMITH, D.D.—Noticed by the Poet in “The Twa Herds,” also in “The Holy Fair” and “The Kirk’s Alarm,” Dr. George Smith ministered in the parish of Galston from 1778 till his death, which took place on the 28th April 1823. Dr. Smith rigidly adhered to the New Light party.

PROFESSOR DUGALD STEWART.—Son of Dr. Matthew Stewart, Professor of Mathematics in the University of Edinburgh, this eminent metaphysician was born on the 22nd November 1753. In his nineteenth year he became assistant to his father in his professorial duties, and on his death in 1775 was elected as his successor. In 1785 he exchanged the Mathematical Chair for that of Moral Philosophy in the same University. Through Dr. Mackenzie, surgeon at Mauchline, Professor Stewart, in August 1786, received a copy of Burns’s Kilmarnock volume, and he was much struck with the Poet’s genius. On the 23rd of October thereafter, the Poet, accompanied by Dr. Mackenzie, dined with him in his villa of Catrine, near Mauchline, when Lord Daer was one of the party. At Edinburgh, in course of the following winter, he received from the Professor much attention and hospitality. Two letters of the Poet to Professor Stewart, dated 3rd May 1788 and 20th January 1789, contain strong expressions of appreciation and gratitude. Professor Stewart died at Edinburgh on the 11th June 1828. To his memory a monument has been erected on the Calton Hill.

MRS. KATHERINE STEWART OF STAIR.—This gentlewoman, *née* Katherine Gordon of Afton, married, on the 1st February 1770, Alexander Stewart of Stair. Stair House, with its beautiful enclosures, is situated on the banks of the river Ayr, about three miles below Baskimming. According to Dr. Robert Chambers, when Burns in 1785 accompanied his friend, David Sillar, to Stair House on a visit to the servant lasses (to one of whom, Margaret Orr, Sillar was attached), he handed to them copies of some of his songs. One of these falling in the way of Mrs. Stewart, she requested that when he next visited the house he should be shown into the drawing-room. This narrative is of doubtful authenticity; but about September

1786 the Poet is found addressing a letter to Mrs. Stewart, in which he enclosed to her several of his unprinted songs, including his recent lyric in commemoration of Miss Wilhelmina Alexander. The Poet's letter concludes in these words:—

One feature of your character I shall ever with grateful pleasure remember—the reception I got when I had the honor of waiting on you at Stair. I am little acquainted with politeness, but I know a good deal of benevolence of temper and goodness of heart. Surely did those in exalted stations know how happy they could make some classes of their inferiors by condescension and affability, they would never stand so high, measuring out with every look the height of their elevation, but condescend as sweetly as did Mrs. Stewart of Stair.

By the Poet Mrs. Stewart is respectfully referred to in "The Brigs of Ayr," and, according to Dr. Currie, he composed in her honour the song, "Flow gently, sweet Afton." Mrs. Stewart's husband, afterwards Major-General Stewart, was colonel of the 2nd Regiment of Foot, and was M.P. for Kirkcudbrightshire from 1786 to 1790. He died on the 17th December 1794. The family sold the estate of Stair, and thereafter Mrs. Stewart erected a new mansion on a portion of the Enterkin estate, which she named Afton Lodge. She there died in January 1818, and her remains were deposited in the parish churchyard of Stair. Katherine, her eldest daughter, married, in 1794, William Cunningham of Enterkin.

MARY STEWART.—In his song, "Oh, lovely Polly Stewart," contributed to Johnson's *Museum* in 1796, the Poet celebrates the daughter of his friend, William Stewart, factor at Closeburn. Miss Stewart was born in 1775. She married her cousin, by whom she had three sons; she afterwards contracted an alliance with a person named Welsh. Latterly she associated with one Fleitz, a Swiss soldier. She died at Florence in 1847. (Library edition of Burns's Works, vol. iii. p. 16).

WILLIAM STEWART.—This gentleman was factor on the estate of Closeburn, then possessed by the Rev. James Stuart Menteith. The Poet frequently visited Mr. Stewart in his Excise rides. In his honour he composed the song, "You're welcome, Willie Stewart," which he inscribed on a crystal tumbler, now preserved at Abbotsford.

REV. JAMES STEVEN, D.D.—The subject of Burns's poem, "The Calf," Dr. Steven was, when the Poet composed his satire, ministerial assistant at Ardrossan. In 1787 he was ordained minister of Crown Court Chapel,

London, and when holding that office, became one of the founders of the London Missionary Society. In 1803 he was admitted as minister of Kilwinning. He died on the 15th February 1824. He was eminently energetic, and was much esteemed as an earnest expounder of Divine truth.

GEORGE S. SUTHERLAND.—For the use of this gentleman, who conducted the theatre at Dumfries, Burns composed two prologues, both spoken in 1790, one beginning, “No song nor dance I bring from yon great city;” the other commencing, “What needs this din about the town o’ Lon’on.”

ALEXANDER FRASER TYTLER.—Eldest son of William Tytler of Woodhouselee, Writer to the Signet, this gentleman was born on the 15th October 1747, and, having been trained to legal pursuits, was admitted advocate in January 1770. In 1780 he was appointed joint-Professor of Universal History. Consequent, as is believed, on the interest which his father had evinced in the Poet’s welfare, he also became concerned on his behalf; and when the poem of “Tam o’ Shanter” appeared in Grose’s *Antiquities*, he, in a letter dated 12th March 1791, communicated with the Bard, expressing his high admiration, and offering certain suggestions. One of them the Poet adopted by excluding from the poem the following lines:—

Three lawyers’ tongues turn’d inside out,
Wi’ lies seam’d like a beggar’s clout;
And priests’ hearts, rotten, black as muck,
Lay stinking, vile, in every neuk.

Warmly appreciating Mr. Tytler as a critic, the Poet in 1793 submitted a number of his recent compositions to his revision. For several years Mr. Tytler held office as Depute Judge-Advocate, and in 1802 he became a judge in the Court of Session, with the title of Lord Woodhouselee. He published *Decisions of the Court of Session*, *Elements of General History*, *Memoirs of Lord Kames*, and other works. He died on the 5th January 1813.

WILLIAM TYTLER OF WOODHOUSELEE.—With Mr. William Tytler the Poet had become acquainted in course of his exertions for Johnson’s *Museum*, and on the 4th May 1787, the day before he left the city on his Border tour, he sent him, along with a copy of his silhouette portrait by Miers, his Jacobitical verses beginning, “Revered defender of the beauteous Stuart.” In August of the same year he submitted to Mr. Tytler some

specimens of ballad poetry which he had gleaned in the western districts. Mr. Tytler was an enthusiast in his love of Scottish music and song, and was one of those who gave early encouragement to Mr. George Thomson in forming his collection. An intelligent antiquary, he contributed several papers to the *Antiquarian Transactions*, but his best-known work is his *Inquiry, Historical and Critical, into the Evidence against Mary Queen of Scots*. Mr. Tytler was born on the 12th October 1711, and died on the 12th December 1792.

HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.—Authoress of numerous works, both in prose and verse, chiefly in relation to political affairs in France, Miss Williams was born in London in 1762. An early admirer of the Poet, she, on reading his “Mountain Daisy,” composed a sonnet in his honour, which Dr. Moore enclosed to him in his letter of the 23rd January 1787. The sonnet closes in these lines:—

Scotia! from rude afflictions shield thy Bard,
His heav’n taught numbers Fame herself will guard.

In 1788 Miss Williams published her poem on the slave trade. In acknowledging a presentation copy of the poem, Burns, in a lengthened communication, written from Ellisland in July 1789, offered some criticisms in reference to certain forms of expression, while commending the composition generally in warm terms. In her reply Miss Williams informed the Poet that “a much less portion of applause from him would have been gratifying.” Miss Williams died at Paris in December 1827, at the age of sixty-five. A warm approver of the French Revolution, she, in consequence of her advocacy of the Brissotins or Girondists, was imprisoned in the Temple of Paris, but was released on the fall of Robespierre. In her later writings she condemned the Revolution, and upheld the cause of the Bourbons. For a list of Miss Williams’s writings, see Allibone’s *Dictionary*, vol. iii. p. 2739.

JOHN WILSON, TARBOLTON.—The subject of the Poet’s satirical poem, “Death and Dr. Hornbook,” John Wilson was parish schoolmaster of Tarbolton, and in 1785, when Burns composed his poem, had sought to add to his emoluments by opening a small shop, in which he sold grocery goods and drugs. According to Mr. J. G. Lockhart, Wilson was constrained, from the force of the satire, both to close his shop and abandon his school. Having removed to Glasgow, he there prospered as a teacher, and ultimately

obtained the respectable appointment of session clerk of the parish of Gorbals. He died on the 13th January 1839. Wilson rejoiced in having been the theme of one of Burns's most effective poems.

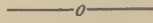
REV. PATRICK WODROW, D.D.—This reverend gentleman is facetiously referred to by the Poet in "The Twa Herds." Second son of the eminent ecclesiastical historian of the name, he was born in 1715, and ordained minister of Tarbolton in 1738; he died on the 17th April 1793. Dr. Wodrow was distinguished for his piety and learning.

WILLIAM WOODS.—An eminent player, known as the "Scottish Roscius." Mr. Woods was an intimate associate of the poet Fergusson, who in his "Last Will" has remembered him in these lines:—

To Woods, whose genius can provoke
The passions to the bowl or sock,
For love to thee and to the Nine,
Be my immortal *Shakespeare* thine.

Warmly cherishing Woods' society, Burns composed the prologue beginning, "When by a generous public's kind acclaim," which was spoken by the player on Monday the 16th April 1787, when at Edinburgh he took the part of Ford in the "Merry Wives of Windsor." Woods was born in 1751, and died in 1802; his tombstone in the Old Calton burial-ground at Edinburgh was renewed in 1866. (Library edition of Burns's Works, vol. ii. pp. 58, 59.)

APPENDIX II.



UNPUBLISHED VERSES ON THE MEMORY OF BURNS.

BY THE REV. DR. HENRY DUNCAN, MINISTER OF RUTHWELL.¹

PORTENTOUS sigh'd the hollow blast
That sorrow-freighted southward past;
I heard the sound, and stood aghast
 In solemn dread;
The mournful truth is told at last,
 And Burns is dead.

Ah, sweetest minstrel, Nature's child,
Could not thy native woodnotes wild,
Thy manly sense, thy manners mild,
 And sprightly glee,
The dreaded tyrant have beguiled
 To set thee free?

Unfriended, desolate, and young,
Misfortune o'er thy cradle hung;
And penury had check'd thy song,
 But check'd in vain:
Till death, with unrelenting wrong,
 Has closed the strain.

Thus, midst the cold of winter's snows,
The bright and naked snowdrop blows;
Its pure and native beauty glows,
 And charms the eyes,
Till past some ruthless spoiler goes,
 And crops the prize.

¹ See *supra*, pp. 65, 68. An erudite and accomplished clergyman, Dr. Duncan is chiefly known as the founder of Parish or Saving Banks, and as the first observer of extinct animals in the new red sandstone. He composed poems

and songs. Born in 1774, he officiated as parish minister of Ruthwell from 1799 to 1843, and thereafter in the same parish in connexion with the Free Church till his death in 1846.

But not for thee, O Bard, the lot
 In cold oblivion's shade to rot,
 Like those unhonour'd and forgot,
 The unfeeling great ;
 Who knew thy worth, but hasten'd not
 To soothe thy fate.

Whilst love to beauty pours the sigh,
 Whilst genius shall with nature vie,
 Whilst pity from the melting eye
 Shall claim regard,
 Thy honour'd name shall never die,
 Immortal Bard !

But oft as winter o'er the plain
 Shall pour at eve the beating rain,
 The hind shall call his little train
 Around the fire,
 To listen to some thrilling strain
 Of thy loved lyre.

Whether to heaven's eternal King
 Thou strike the deep-resounding string,
 Whilst, rising on devotion's wing,
 Hope soars above
 To happier realms of endless spring
 And boundless love.

Or whether lighter strains beguile
 The moments of relaxing toil,
 Bidding on labour's front the smile
 Of pleasure sit ;
 The roof re-echoing all the while
 To native wit.

Or if wild Fancy seize the rein,
 Whilst horror thrills through every vein,
 And sprites and elves, an awful train,
 Their orgies keep ;
 And warlocks o'er the frighted plain
 At midnight sweep.

As works the spell, the fairy band
 Aghast in mute attention stand ;
 Again thou wav'st thy magic wand
 Of power so rare,
 And all the scene of Fancy plann'd
 Dissolves in air.

Thine, too, the charm of social hearts,
 Where wit its vivid lightning darts,
 And, answering keen, to age imparts
 The fire of youth,
 Whilst from the fierce encounter starts
 The spark of truth.

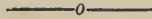
Old Coila first, whose braes among
 Thy infant hands the wild harp strung,
 Shall flourish in thy deathless song
 With lasting fame ;
 And Ayr shall henceforth roll along
 A classic stream.

But thou, O Bard, in silence laid,
 Oh, what shall soothe thy pensive shade
 For youth and genius ill repaid
 With bounty scant,
 And hours of sorrow unallay'd,
 And toil and want ?

See on thy song, as loud it swells,
 The lordly thane delighted dwells,
 Or to his fair his rapture tells
 By thee inspired ;
 His bosom, as the strain impels,
 Or thaw'd or fired.

[A concluding stanza has so faded in the author's MS. as to be undecipherable.]

APPENDIX III.



RESTORATION OF THE POET'S ANCESTRAL TOMBSTONE AT KIRKOSWALD.

INAUGURAL CEREMONY, 3RD AUGUST 1883.

(Collected from the Local Journals.)

ON Friday, 3rd August 1883, the restored tombstone erected to the memory of the maternal grandparents and great-grandparents of the Poet Burns at Kirkoswald was inaugurated by an interesting ceremony. Shortly after ten o'clock a considerable company assembled in the village, and were conducted over the various places made interesting by the Poet. Among other places visited were the houses of Peggy Thomson, one of the Poet's earliest charmers, and of "Souter Johnnie" (or rather, that of his prototype, John Davidson), the hostelry of "Kirkton Jean," and the old schoolhouse attended by the Poet. The company then adjourned to the new schoolhouse, in which were exhibited some interesting articles which belonged to characters introduced in the poem of "Tam o' Shanter." The arm-chair in which the Souter was wont to sit, newly covered for the occasion, was shown to the visitors, who were privileged to sit on the ancient relic. "Kirkton Jean's" pair of candlesticks were also exhibited, together with the Souter's family Bible and family register; the tongue of the bell from the old kirk at Tarbolton, mentioned in "Death and Dr. Hornbook," and a cabinet once in possession of Kate Stein, the witch in "Tam o' Shanter." Shortly before twelve a procession was formed, and, preceded by the stalwart piper of the Marquis of Ailsa, the company marched into the village through a fine floral arch into the auld kirkyard of the parish. Here the auld kirk was visited, and the vault prepared for the Ailsa family; the grave of Douglas Graham, the prototype of "Tam o' Shanter," and his wife Helen M'Taggart; of "Souter Johnnie" and his wife; and of Hugh Roger, the Poet's schoolmaster. At noon

a circle was formed round the grave, among those present being the youthful Earl of Cassillis; Dr. Rogers, Edinburgh; Rev. Dr. Gray, Liberton; Rev. John Findlay, minister of the parish; Rev. William Arbuckle, Free Church, Kirkoswald; Rev. R. Lawson, Maybole; ex-Bailie M'Kie, Kilmarnock; ex-Bailie Rae, Ayr; Francis Marshall of Park; David Murray, writer, Glasgow; and George Wilson of Dalmarnock.

Dr. ROGERS then spoke as follows—Friends and fellow-countrymen, we have met to unveil a restored tombstone in a rural churchyard. The persons commemorated on that tombstone died upwards of a century ago; while of all of them it may be said—

Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet these humble persons possess a distinction not doubtful, as progenitors of one who at the plough sang so sweetly as to awaken the echoes of his country. Burns's admirers are familiar with his lines—

My father was a farmer
Upon the Carrick border,
And carefully he bred me
In decency and order.

But few are aware that from his ancestors, who for many generations were husbandmen in Carrick, he derived his love of country, his love of liberty, and in a measure his love of song. For those commemorated on this tombstone, the Brouns and the M'Greans (or Graemes) and the Rennies, sprang from a Celtic stock in the old kingdom of Strathclyde. Their modern progenitors were adherents of the Covenant; while in times remote they belonged to a people who long preceded the northern races in general culture and in a knowledge of the arts. Till the tenth century the Strathclyde people were an unmixed race, and to them, as well as to other Celtic tribes, belonged the bards and seannachies. Those familiar with Ossianic poetry will mark a resemblance between the breathings of the son of Fingal and the minstrelsy of the Ayrshire Bard. Both are charmed by the beauties of the landscape,—the hill, the dale, the stream, the lake, the heath,—yet each evinces the poetry of action. Both the ancient and the modern bard portray the heroic virtues; but what Ossian presents in prowess, Burns depicts in sympathy and affection. Ossian's heroines bear formidable daggers; if Burns's heroines kill, it is by the dart of love. And pardon me

if I venture upon the thought that, through his Celtic blood, the Bard of Scotland may have descended from a race which produced that people who sung the Divine praises on the fields of Bethlehem, and hung their harps by the rivers of Babylon. That the Celts hailed from Phœnicia is all but certain; and that a portion of Israel joined in their westward migrations, if it cannot be proved, is, nevertheless, a pleasing conception. David at his lyre, and Burns with his rural harp, have for humanity effected more than all the other minstrels of the world.

For reasons other than any supposed connexion of Robert Burns, through his yeomen sires, with the Celtic bards of a distant age, do we renew a tombstone lately moss-clad. For in such estimation do we hold the Ayrshire Poet, that we would testify our appreciation after a mean sort did we deem any of his kindred, whether living or dead, unworthy of our regard. On the part of those promoting this restoration, I may say, if any of the Poet's race chanced to lack bread, they would not offer them a stone. In effecting what we have done, we thought it our duty to preserve from further decay a simple slab commemorating the forefathers of one who has for his country done more "than all her kings." To our forefathers we are, under God, indebted largely. If we are strong in body or in mind powerful, the inheritance was transmitted to us by our sires; if our surroundings are honourable, these too we derived through the path which our progenitors opened up. How much we, as fellow-countrymen of Robert Burns, owe to the humble husbandmen of Kirkoswald may not well be estimated. In his *Autobiography*, Lord Brougham remarks, respecting his maternal descent from the Celtic Robertsons of Struan, that without that ancestry he would have "remained in the state of respectable mediocrity" occupied by his fathers.

Burns's ancestors in the Mearns were husbandmen, in rank and culture resembling his maternal progenitors at Strathclyde. His father, William Burnes, driven by poverty from his early home, at length settled at Alloway, and there leased a small farm. He courted Agnes Broun, and won her; on the 15th December 1757 she became his wife. Agnes was born at Kirkoswald; her birth is recorded in the parish register. The Broun sept, to which she paternally belonged, may be traced in Galloway for six centuries at least. Walter le Brun was one of the barons who in 1116 witnessed the inquisition of the Church lands in Galloway. During the fifteenth century members of the family held municipal offices at Ayr and Prestwick. Gilbert Broun was a town councillor of Ayr in 1582. Thereafter persons

of the name appear at Ayr as skippers, and in Carrick as husbandmen. A branch settled at Kirkoswald prior to 1639, when John Broun subscribed the Covenant there. To the Presbyterian cause members of the Broun family adhered warmly. James and Andrew Broun of Cumnock were condemned in June 1683 for being concerned in the insurrection at Bothwell; while belonging to the same district was John Brown of Priesthill, who in May 1685 was by Graham of Claverhouse shot dead near his own cottage. The Poet's maternal grandmother had in early youth personally sheltered the Covenanters.

John Broun, farmer at Craigenton, nearly two miles to the south-west of the spot on which we are now assembled, grandson of that John Broun who subscribed the Covenant, married, in 1695, Janet M'Grean. The Grims, Graemes, and M'Greans (for all belonged to the same sept) were Celts. Specially renowned for their strength, they derived their family name from their physique. Whatever of turbulence our Poet owned came from these old Graemes. Janet M'Grean was his great-grandmother, and she died in 1739. Her husband, nearly twenty years an elder of Kirkoswald parish, died in 1724.

In the farm of Craigenton, extending to nearly three hundred acres, John Broun was succeeded by several of his sons, just as in the holding he was originally associated with his brothers. The joint occupancy of a farm was common in those times, the occupants holding different proportions varying from ten to a hundred acres. Each took his share of labour, both on the land they held in common, and also on the land of the proprietor, service being often an equivalent for rent. In the work of tillage, one held the plough, a second drove four horses in the yoke, and a third wielded an instrument which cleared the mould-board.

Of the brothers Broun, Gilbert had a principal share of Craigenton farm. He was in circumstances to marry in 1731, when only twenty-four. His wife, Agnes Rennie, belonged to the neighbourhood. Great-granddaughter of Andrew Rennie, who at Kirkoswald subscribed the Covenant in 1639, she derived a remote descent from a sept of the name who, hailing from the Rhynns of Galloway, traced descent from the royal line of Stewart. Mrs. Gilbert Broun (Agnes Rennie), seized with a pulmonary ailment, lay at the age of thirty-four upon her death-bed. She had six children, of whom the eldest, Agnes, afterwards the Poet's mother, was then in her tenth year. To a sister who visited her she said, "I am content to die; Gilbert will get another wife, and I leave my bairns in God's care." Respecting the child

who reported her saying, the solemn bequest was realized when, on the 25th January 1759, her eldest son, Robert Burns, was born.

When, about two years after Agnes Rennie's death, Gilbert Broun married a second time, his eldest daughter proceeded to her grandmother's. Afterwards, when a brother of her father's lost his sight, she became his housekeeper, and read to him. The stanzas of the ballad, "The Life and Age of Man," when sung by his niece, deeply moved him, and he called for it frequently. Sung by Agnes Broun to the infant Poet, it evoked his love of melody; on the ballad he founded his "Man was made to mourn."

Born at Alloway in Kyle, it was meet that the harp which the Poet inherited from his Celtic ancestors should be attuned in Carrick. In 1776, at the age of seventeen, he was sent to Kirkoswald to complete his education as a private pupil of Mr. Hugh Roger, the parish schoolmaster, a self-taught mathematician. Here it was hoped he might be accommodated as a boarder by his mother's brother, Samuel, who had lately married. As, however, his uncle's space at Ballochneil, within a mile to the westward of this spot, was circumscribed, he was taken into the farmhouse, the farmer, Mr. Robert Niven, being both his uncle's employer and his brother-in-law. The Poet's bed-fellow was John Niven, afterwards husband of the schoolmaster's daughter, and, as such, father of Miss Janet Niven, an active promoter of the movement now consummated so happily, and whose presence with us this morning we most cordially welcome. His grandson, who owns his grandfather's feu, is also with us.

Robert Burns and John Niven became attached friends; and the Poet, when not prosecuting his studies, which he did with much ardour, was either sauntering with him, or with his cousin, William Niven from Maybole, who was boarded at Kirkoswald in order to profit by Mr. Roger's instructions. With one or other of these companions, Burns, on the weekly holiday, visited interesting scenes, and made visits to Maybole and other localities. To a cottage in the parish he frequently resorted. This was John Davidson's, the souter at Glenfoot; for John's wife, Anne Gillespie, had been maid-servant at Craigenton in his mother's childhood. Four of the Souter's grandsons are within reach of me at this moment.

The farmer at Shanter, near Glenfoot, was Douglas Graham, probably a distant relative of the Poet through his grandmother. Doubtless Burns met Graham at Souter Davidson's, for these neighbours were often together. Graham invited Burns to his house, and an opportunity of visiting him soon occurred. On a school holiday on occasion of the Ayr market, Burns and

John Niven determined to sail to Ailsa Craig, fourteen miles distant. At the Maidens' village they got into a boat, but, a strong gale arising, they were compelled to return. As they reached the shore, rain began to fall, followed by a terrific thunderstorm. The lads sought shelter in Shanter farmhouse, and were there welcomed by the gudewife.

The gudewife of Shanter was Helen M'Taggart. She might have been prototype of Helen M'Gregor, for she was quick in temper, and in speech unwise and rash. She "spoke her mind," and, keeping the lads all day to listen to her, she, after her fashion, denounced both her gudeman and the Souter, who would, she predicted, return from the fair very late. As to her husband, she augured that witches (for superstition ruled in the district) would seize him unawares, or he would be drowned in the Doon. The lads were diverted by her speeches, and laughed at them on their way home. Early next morning Burns drafted his "Tam o' Shanter," which he handed to his bedfellow; it was afterwards shown to Douglas Graham. The honest farmer did not perceive the humour, and simply remarked that the story could not apply to him, since his riding beast was a horse, and he never had a mare of the name of Meg, nor any mare without a tail. Burns did not publish the poem in his Kilmarnock volume, nor did he include it in his first Edinburgh edition. When at Ellisland in 1790, Captain Grose solicited a poem to be included in his work on *Scottish Antiquities*, he added to the poem and improved it; it appeared in Grose's work in 1791.

About Douglas Graham, the prototype of Tam o' Shanter, there is nothing remarkable. His great-grandfather subscribed the Covenant in 1639, and he was an industrious man, with a failing nearly universal among Carrick farmers; he was addicted to smuggling. The burial-place of the family is immediately to the south of that of the Brouns. "Souter Johnnie," an industrious tradesman, often worked in the farmers' houses, converting their home-dried leather into shoes for the children and hinds. All profited by the Souter's intelligence; all shared his snuff-mull. Neither he nor Graham were toppers. Their remains rest near the spot we are met upon. The Souter died in 1806; he is remembered by his grandson, Mr. John Davidson, who is with us to-day.

"The miller" of "Tam o' Shanter" was Hugh Broun, of the Poet's race. Tenant of Ardlochan Mill, near the Carrick shore, he was fifty-six in 1776, and a hearty bachelor. "The smith" was John Niven, a relative of the Ballochneil family, and therefore a connection of the Poet. Prior to his time the farm vehicles of Carrick consisted of sledges without wheels. John

Niven was the first in the district to construct wheeled carts. "Kirkton Jean" was Jean Kennedy, who, along with her sister Anne, was landlady of the Kirkton Inn, within one hundred yards of this spot. Known as "the Leddies," they were held in general esteem. The witch,

Lang after kenn'd on Carrick shore,

was Julia Robinson. Aiding smugglers in concealing their stores, she was intentionally reputed as uncanny, that her dwelling might not be disturbed. Her "wee Nannie" was Katherine Stein, also a receiver of contraband goods. Kate's cottage, at Park in Ballochneil Glen, had in the centre of its single apartment a wide deep pit for concealing smuggled goods. That the concealment might be effectual, she sat at her spinning-wheel, which, with her chest of drawers or cabinet, which we have seen to-day, stood over the entrance. Though styled a witch, Kate was generally popular. The name of witch, she remarked to one still living, had not done her any harm. In her old age the young hinds resorted to her dwelling to hear her old tales: At Ballochneil Mill indigent persons were privileged to hang up bags to receive handfuls of meal from the farmers assembling at the mill. Kate's bag was kept full. She died in 1816. In one of his walks with John or William Niven, Burns visited the fairy hillocks of Cassilis Downans, beyond Maybole. The visit suggested his ballad of "Halloween," in which most of the characters belong to Kirkoswald. "Rab McGrean" was of the Poet's own kindred. "Wee Jenny" was Samuel Broun's adopted daughter, and "her uncle Johnnie" was John Niven. "Tam Kipples" was son of Mr. William Cupples, the late minister of the parish. "Eppie Sim" was the daughter of Donald Sim, who lived at Ardlochan. "Achmacalla," a name in the poem not hitherto identified, was the Poet's fanciful adaptation of Fardincalla, a place half a mile to the westward of the spot on which we now stand, on the farm of Kirklands.

At Kirkoswald Burns first discovered that he was a poet; here, in the second house from the corner of the road leading to the manse from this churchyard, he composed one of his earliest songs—that on Peggy Thomson. Before the school broke up for the autumn holidays in August, he saw Peggy in her father's garden, behind the school, and was entranced. He met and talked with the young beauty, and his passion increased; he could study no more, indeed he could hardly sleep. It was well the affair lasted only eight days, namely, from the 23rd to the 31st August, otherwise the Poet had been hopelessly enslaved. He returned to Mount Oliphant.

To Kirkoswald Burns returned in the summer of 1786, to bid farewell to his relatives in the prospect of his emigrating. He was kindly received by John Niven, his friend at Ballochneil, also by William Neilson, husband of Peggy Thomson, farmer and grocer, who, on his leaving, gave him a long convoy. To Peggy he presented a copy of his volume, with a poetical inscription commencing—

Once fondly lov'd, and still remember'd dear.

Since Burns's latest visit to Kirkoswald have sped nearly one hundred years. During the interval most of his contemporaries have passed into oblivion, remembered only in their family records or on their tombstones. His own memory is fresh,—fresh as when he died. At the mention of his name is recalled the impersonation of wisdom, manliness, gentleness, and common sense. Nature's own high priest, he was consecrated by her hand. With his pen has he depicted the loves, the joys, the rural scenes and rural pleasures of his country. Breathing the air of song, he has attracted by his Muse all hearts, moving some by mirth, others by pathos. In the brook of fancy gathering pearls, he has strung them by a faery cord, fit necklace for the nation's breast. A magician, he waved the poetic wand, and mountain and wood and stream responded to his call. Through his strains do the Ayr, the Doon, the Devon, the Bruar, and the Nith glide more smoothly; even the Stinchar, with its inharmonious name, becomes a melody. To his enchanting harp-music assembled the wild birds and the doves. At his smile the stream reflected sunlight; as he sighed, the winds were still. Burns interpreted nature in a soul teeming with benevolence; in his view the river hugged its bank, the dew kissed the rosebud, the heath caressed the soil, the oak embraced the breeze.

Milton and Spenser penetrated into the unseen; Shakespeare exhausted words and imagined new; Burns chose as his theme Scotland and humanity. Dispensing with the classic verbiage of the elder poets, and discarding all artificialities of thought and style, he chose words and figures which the cottage might comprehend, yet the learned not disapprove. Recognising the bards who had preceded him, he recast their thoughts, smoothed their numbers, and refined their measures. Under the title of "Auld Lang Syne," several bards had, not without merit, sought to awaken tender memories, but it was reserved for Burns to produce an ode that could move all hearts, and gild with present joy the remembrance of the past.

Though Burns's genius brimmed with melody, yet, according to the

testimony of his contemporaries, poetry was not his forte. Principal Robertson remarked that, while he was surprised by his poetry, he was more so by his prose, and still more by his conversation. Sir Gilbert Elliot, afterwards Lord Minto, regarded his refinement as more wonderful than his genius. Gentlewomen were fascinated by his eloquence; a duchess testified to the witchery of his talk.

A king in peasant's garments, his presence inspired veneration. No passer-by was content to look at him only once; his eye flashed fervour; "his whole countenance" (as his sister remarked to me) "beamed with genius." Personally unobtrusive, his demeanour commanded respect and repelled presumption. Rank, supported by character, he revered; but title without honour he contemned and spurned. In his eyes

The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

From their dominions despots should exclude the poetry of Burns; adverse to their principles, it is condemnatory of their practice. By birthright, held Burns, all were free; brothers to each other, slaves to none. Integrity was better than abundance, honesty than riches.

A prince may mak' a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's abune his might,
Guid faith, he maunna fa' that!

There was, felt the Poet, disgrace in indolence, none in poverty. One man had as much the right to be poor as had another the right to be rich.

Is there for honest poverty
Who hangs his head and a' that?
The coward slave—we pass him by,
And dare be poor for a' that.

The clothed in purple and fine linen who neglected the poor around him might quail in dread of retribution, but he who was willing to earn the fruit of honest industry had no cause for shame.

See yonder poor o'erlaboured wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil;
And see his lordly fellow-worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful though a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn.

Burns dearly loved his country. With a poet's-eye viewing the land of his birth, he exclaims—

Their groves of sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
 Where bright-beaming summers exalt the perfume ;
 Far dearer to me yon lone glen o' green breckan,
 Wi' the burn stealing under the long yellow broom.

Scotland was less dear to him from its scenery than as the nursery of freedom. Born amidst scenes of pastoral beauty, and within view of Arran with its majestic peaks, and Ailsa Craig with its grand broad summit, he, in his youth, preferred to meditate in the Leglen woods, because there Wallace had wandered before him. Even in childhood he dreamt of laying a wreath on the altar of his country. He wrote—

I had,
 A wish—I mind its power—
 A wish that to my latest hour
 Will strongly heave my breast,
 That I for puir auld Scotland's sake
 Some usefu' plan or beuk could make,
 Or sing a sang at least.

On the field of Bannockburn he reverently knelt ; he kissed the pavement stone that in Dunfermline Abbey covered the tomb of the great King Robert. In his bosom patriotism was enshrined. For Scotland, who has expressed more thrilling sentiments than these :—

O Scotia, my dear, my native soil !
 For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent,
 Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
 Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content !
 And O may Heaven their simple lives prevent
 From Luxury's contagion, weak and vile !
 Then howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
 A virtuous populace may rise the while,
 And stand a wall of fire around their much-lov'd isle.

While animating soldiers on the field of battle, his ode of "Scots wha hae" has invigorated the desponding and aroused the brave everywhere. Than these, what words more inspiring were ever written :—

Wha will be a traitor knave ?
 Wha can fill a coward's grave ?
 Wha sae base as be a slave ?
 Let him turn and flee.

With his poetic wand Burns struck the rock of liberty, and a stream gushed forth, never to be dried up.

When he entered the field of Scottish minstrelsy, he found a lamentable degradation. In the castle the songs were coarse, in the cottage licentiousness and the roundelay walked hand in hand. The ballads, whether published in books or vended by the chapmen, were profane. He took them up, and in the alembic of his genius a power for evil became a power for good. Fire which scorched came to purify; lead and dross became as gold and silver. Of upwards of two hundred and fifty songs, of which he was the author, Burns composed the greater number to the older melodies as substitutes for words demoralizing and worthless. Soon after completing this achievement, he passed away, yet already the refining influence of his lyre had extended from Kirkmaiden to John o' Groat's, from Fifeness to the Mull of Cantyre.

In restoring woman to her true place as man's companion and equal, it was reserved for the Bard of Ayrshire to advance her mission yet a further stage. Hitherto discouraged in cultivating her intellectual faculties, she now took her proper place in art, in poetry, and in fiction. That ringing stroke on the national anvil, which by the hand of Burns emancipated woman, made way for the feminine strains of the "Laird o' Cockpen," the "Land o' the Leal," "Auld Robin Gray," and other songs of melting pathos or overwhelming humour. And what the Ladies Nairne and Anne Barnard began has in our own time been sustained by the sweet strains of Mrs. Ogilvy in her *Highland Minstrelsy*, also by other poetesses of reputation.

Burns died at thirty-seven; his grandmother, Agnes Rennie, at thirty-four. From Agnes he inherited a pulmonary weakness, which afflicted him even when to others he seemed robust and vigorous. The world had probably appreciated the Poet less if he had been associated with the old. He died when his work was done. It is related by Cicero, that while Tarchun was at the plough, a genius, with a man's head and a child's body, started from the furrow, and, having delivered a message of wisdom, sank down and died. What the fabled Tages was to Etruria, Burns was to Scotland. He rose from the furrow, mature and wise, gave forth counsels, and sank into his rest. He flashed meteor-like, and passed away, so that, when his career had closed, men at first hardly remembered that he had lived. Nevertheless he left behind a most precious legacy. What of him there was mortal rests near the banks of the Nith, but his immortal part has

soared up, a bright star in the galaxy of immortals. The spirit of his genius hovers in the homes, dwells in the hearts of his countrymen. In the words of Longfellow—

For now he haunts his native land
As an immortal youth ; his hand
Guides every plough ;
He sits beside each ingle nook,
His voice is in each rushing brook,
Each rustling bough.

Elevating were the memories of Caledonia, but its soil was rugged, its climate harsh, its winds cold. Educing melody from the blast, minstrelsy from the storm, Burns, with the harpsichord of an ardent patriotism, awakened the echoes of his country.

To natives of Scotland his memory is more endearing than the memory of any bard or philosopher, recent or remote. Every spot he trod upon has derived an interest from his genius. The cottage of his birth, his several dwellings, his oaken staff, his punch-bowl, his arm-chair, the press which printed his poems, are treasures, all of them.

Yet some there are—happily fewer every year—who find pleasure in the discovery that Burns had failings like other men. Those who detect maculæ upon his character must remember that on the sun's disk there are spots. If Burns erred, he repented. His errors were those of his time. At the centenary celebration of his birth, held in the Glasgow City Hall in 1859, I remember the reverberating cheers which proceeded from a vast assembly when the eloquent chairman, Sir Archibald Alison, expressed himself thus : “ If any one would remind me of the Poet's errors, I would answer him in the words of Bolingbroke, when reminded of the failings of his opponent, the illustrious Marlborough : ‘ Yes, I know he had faults, but he was so great a man that I have forgotten what they were.’ ” On the same occasion Colonel William Nicol Burns quoted the Poet's words addressed to his mother—“ Jean, they'll ken me better an hundred years hence than they do now.” The Poet augured rightly.

Burns soiled his wing, yet remained a bird of paradise. His virtues have ennobled his race and nation. He was essentially religious. Such testimony was strongly borne to myself by his sister, Mrs. Begg, who, being twelve years his junior, he instructed in the Catechism and in the Scriptures ; he maintained family worship at Mossgiel, and continued it at Ellisland ; he devoutly meditated in his chamber, prayed with the sick, worshipped in the

sanctuary. One of his earliest purchases when he began housekeeping, was a family Bible. His letters to Mrs. Dunlop abound in pious sentiments, and the Poet would certainly not express what he did not feel. In his verse he warns against impiety, and in his sacred poems kneels reverently at the Divine footstool. His "Cotter's Saturday Night" impresses domestic piety upon his countrymen and upon mankind. It was because he loved religion that he condemned its counterfeit—it was because he revered the truth that he scorned dissimulation. With that mockery of devotion which could in the same breath praise God and defame men, he was more than impatient. He wrote—

All hail, Religion, maid divine,
 Pardon a Muse sae mean as mine,
 Who in his rough imperfect line
 Thus dares to name thee;
 To stigmatize false friends o' thine
 Can ne'er defame thee.

If in Burns's writings there are passages which disfigure them, it is well to remember that these were not published by himself, but morbidly gathered and unrighteously added after he was gone. Not content with the flowers which he laid reverently on the altar of his country, his professing admirers heaped up with them straw and litter. Better employed had they been in making more ample provision for his widow and in advancing his sons. Burns's widow, long as she survived him, had no pension from the State, and his sons were promoted, not by the body of his admirers, but by one individual—Sir James Shaw of London, a native of Ayrshire. All his children might have followed the plough like himself, but for this good man.

When Burns in his character and teaching is fully understood, will ensue an important change. The melody of his numbers will not only gratify, but harmonize. When he is understood, every Burns Club will be as a centre of affection—all who unite under his name becoming a band of brothers. When he is understood, these lines of his will not only be heard, but impress deeply :—

Ye whom social pleasure charms,
 Whose hearts the tide of kindness warns,
 Who hold your being on the terns,
 "Each aid the others"—
 Come to my heart, come to my arms,
 My friends, my brothers!

When Burns is understood, "Willie brewed," in its crushing sarcasm, will be fully realized; the delusive joys of the taproom will pale before the joys of the fireside; and the highest pleasure of life will be experienced in "the gude-willie waught" of a sober and wholesome friendship. When Burns is understood, the scorpion-sting of slander will no more lacerate; and the erring will, under the ample fold of a blessed charity, find forgiveness and a home. These words will obtain influence and prevail:—

Gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman;
Though they may gang a kennin' wrang,
To step aside is human.

When Burns is understood, every tiller of the ground will obtain a comfortable home, possessors of the soil finding their chiefest happiness in rendering content an industrious peasantry. When Burns is understood, the union in his veins of Teuton and of Celt will symbolize the happy effects of uniting nations and races by furthering communication and advancing commerce. When Burns is understood, Great Britain will less depend for safety on her walls of timber and of iron than in inviting her neighbours to a mutual confidence. Like the hallowed fire which burned on the Jewish altar, and was not extinguished, the fire of our Poet's genius will from age to age become brighter, till prejudice and passion disappear in the all-pervading flame of a universal amity. In our Poet's words—

Then let us pray that come it may—
As come it will for a' that—
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree, an' a' that;
When man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

In the name of the subscribers, I entrust this restored tombstone to the safe keeping of the minister and heritors and kirk-session of Kirkoswald.

Rev. JOHN FINDLAY, minister of the parish, said — Dr. Rogers, ladies, and gentlemen, in the name of the kirk-session of Kirkoswald, I have much pleasure in undertaking the custody of the chaste and appropriate monument which has just been disclosed to view, and I beg very cordially to thank you, sir, and your coadjutors, for the trouble you have taken in restoring and protecting the old gravestone which commemorates the interesting fact that so many of the maternal ancestors of

Robert Burns lived and died within the parish of Kirkoswald. I have always regarded it as no small honour to this parish that it produced the mothers of two such men as Robert Bruce and Robert Burns,—the Patriot Bruce and the Poet Burns,—the one ranking among the greatest warriors, and the other among the brightest geniuses which the world has ever seen. I have listened with great pleasure to the eloquent oration which has fallen from the lips of Dr. Rogers regarding the descent, the character, and the career of Robert Burns, and I think we are greatly indebted to him for throwing so much new light upon a deeply-interesting subject. Everything tending to elucidate the history of Robert Burns must ever be invested with peculiar interest, as it is impossible for any one to deny that Burns was a very remarkable man. Though born in a peasant's hut, educated at a parish school, and brought up behind the plough, he soon was able to associate on a footing of literary equality, if not superiority, with the most learned men of the age in which he lived. Though much of his time was unavoidably consumed in manual labour and financial worry, and though, like Byron and Raphael, he died at the early age of thirty-seven, he yet accomplished, during his brief and busy life, an amount of literary work such as few men have been able to produce, and some of which will probably live while the world lasts.

Ex-Bailie RAE accepted the tombstone on behalf of the heritors of the parish.

Dr. ROGERS then read the following verses, composed for the occasion by Mr. Matthias Barr :—

If ane there be wha disna feel
 A thrill through a' his bein' steal,
 As he surveys this lowly biel'—
 This narrow bed,
 Where sleep, unmov'd by woe or weal,
 The pulseless dead.

To him we say, "In silence go—
 We hold thee henceforth as a foe ;
 Thee, Scotland, false intruder, know,
 Indignant spurns.
 Yet learn that from the dust below
 Sprang ROBERT BURNS !"

Sprang Burns, the bard to nature true ;
 Sprang Burns, the man we dearly lo'e—

The man wha baseness never knew ;
 The gen'rous mind
 That shed its love like simmer dew
 O'er a' mankind.

His heart—a hame where care might win
 A place for want to shelter in ;
 Nor did he deem it ocht o' sin
 To harbour there
 Dumb things, that at his ca' wad rin
 His meal to share.

I see him restless, wanderin' wide,
 Wi' head erect and manly stride,
 Where tumblin' waters seaward glide,
 His soul on fire—
 His dark e'e turn'd wi' look o' pride
 Upon his lyre.

I hear him murmurin' saft and low
 His tender grief for ithers' woe ;
 I mark him smite wi' fearless blow
 The false and vain ;
 And hear in words that burn and glow
 Truth speak again.

I see him auld before his time,
 I hear him groan frae chime to chime ;
 Still pourin' forth his strains sublime,
 Till breaks his heart ;
 And last I see him, ere his prime,
 In gloom depart.

Depart, but not to share, forgot
 Like common men, the common lot ;
 Oh, never while there breathes a Scot
 Shall die his fame !
 Or Memory frae her pages blot
 His honour'd name.

While bosoms throb wi' hopes and fears,
 While woman's eyes shed love and tears,
 While mountains rise and rivers flow,
 While star-lit evenings come and go,
 While roll the earth and skies along,
 While lives the voice of nature's song,
 While sings a bird or sighs a breeze,
 He will not die, but live with these !

And sae to them frae whom he sprang—
 This heav'n-sent richter o' the wrang—
 We honour give ; and, oh, may lang
 This tribute here
 Be sacred, and, like Robin's sang,
 To Scotland dear !

With regard to the work of restoration, the method adopted has been to frame the old stone in a new one of durable Annan rock, so as to expose both faces to view. The old stone, which is circular-headed, measures three feet by two feet, and is about six inches thick ; the new stone encasing it is four feet eight inches by three feet eight inches, and one foot thick, resting on a double splayed base eighteen inches high ; the whole height being thus a little over six feet. The only enrichment is a simple moulding round the panels and splays on the outside angles, embracing wreaths of the Scottish thistle and mountain daisy. In the space above the old stone is the inscription, "By Public Subscription Re-erected 1883," and underneath, "The enclosed tombstone commemorates the grand and great-grandparents of the Poet Burns." In the panel of the upper base are engraved the following lines :—

From simple sires the Bard had sprung,
 The Scottish harp who sweetly strung ;
 'Midst lowly scenes flashed forth the fire
 That kindled up the Carrick lyre.

The names of the Poet's ancestors, among others which appear on the original tombstone, are "John Broun in Littleton, who died March 3, 1724, aged fifty, and his wife, Janet M'Grean, who died March 28, 1738, aged sixty ; also Gilbert Broun, formerly farmer at Craighton, who died in 1774, aged seventy-nine, and his first wife, Agnes Broun, who died in May 1742, aged thirty-four." The work of restoration has been most satisfactorily executed by Mr. Joseph Boyd, sculptor, Ayr, under the direction of Messrs. Hay & Henderson, architects, Edinburgh.

A dinner was afterwards held in Kirkoswald Hotel. The company included the following, an excellent feature being the presence of ladies :— Dr. Charles Rogers, Edinburgh ; Rev. Dr. Gray, Liberton ; Rev. John Findlay, minister of the parish ; Rev. William Arbuckle, Free Church, Kirkoswald ; Rev. R. Lawson, West Church, Maybole ; ex-Bailie M'Kie, Kilmarnock ; Bailie Rae, Ayr ; Lieut. Chapel, Maybole ; Messrs. James

Hutchison, Kirkoswald; Francis Marshall of Park; David Murray, writer, Glasgow; George Wilson of Dalmarnock; Peter Wilson, Girvan; David Murray, Culzean; A. B. Todd, Cumnock; and William M'Dowall, of the *Dumfries Standard*. There were also present David, Matthew, and James Davidson, grandsons of "Souter Johnnie;" and Miss Janet Niven, daughter of John Niven, companion of the Poet.

Dr. Rogers presided, and Messrs. Murray and G. Wilson acted as croupiers.

After dinner the CHAIRMAN explained that it was intended that Mr. Charles Tennant, M.P., should have presided, but the hon. gentleman could not leave his Parliamentary duties. It was expected that Bailie Wilson of Glasgow would in that case have taken the chair, but, as senior magistrate, he could not leave Glasgow. Hence he had to occupy the place of honour. He was glad that they were favoured with the presence of the descendants of those who were personal friends of the Poet.

The toast of "The Queen" having been proposed, and duly responded to, the Rev. Dr. GRAY of Liberton, in proposing the memory of the Poet, said—There is one central figure round which all of us are grouped, and which gives to our proceedings here to-day their special significance. That central figure represents Robert Burns. I give you his immortal memory. A century ago he was just rising into local celebrity as a rustic bard. A few years after he acquired a national reputation. He has long enjoyed a world-wide fame. Few now deny that he is well entitled to his fame; and we rejoice to-day to pay our humble tribute to his transcendent genius. That genius showed itself in many ways—in his conversational powers, in his literary correspondence, as well as in his poetry. Professor Dugald Stewart, a competent judge, spoke of Burns as a very great man all round, though his greatness specially broke out in poetry. But, indeed, a true and heaven-born poet must be a man of his special and transcendent gifts. It is easy enough to throw thought and feeling into rhyme, but the heaven-born poet is a rare phenomenon. He is a man who has that clear vision of the eye which reads what others dimly discern—that keen susceptibility of the heart which is deeply moved by things which others scarcely feel—that exquisite gift of speech which can express with aptitude and power what others can but stammeringly utter forth. The true poet is a man of genius, who gets in mist and vapour and gives in flood; who interprets things and beings around to us, and even interprets us to ourselves; who paints for us word-pictures from the varied scenes of nature and Providence, and the

varied phases of human nature and human life—pictures we prosaic mortals cannot paint, but the truthfulness, the beauty, and the form of which, when set before us, we must admit and feel. The heaven-born poet carries in his soul an Æolian harp. His heart-strings are its strings. They tremble and thrill under every breath of heaven, every breeze of feeling, every gust of passion. That is a music we cannot create, but we cannot but respond to it, and sometimes it moves and stirs our spirits to their very depth. So judging, we say that Robert Burns was undoubtedly a man of rare genius—a poet of the truest and the highest kind—a Scotsman worthy of his undying fame. What a marvellous power he has exerted—what a power he still exerts over the human soul! How many ardent admirers—nay, devoted worshippers—has he in every part of the civilized world, and among all classes of society! The sparks of genius have everywhere kindled warming fires of sympathy with nature, with the lower animals, with our fellow-men—fires of manly independence and social fellowship, of friendship and patriotism, of liberty and love, of general humanity and Christian charity! He helped men everywhere to believe in the fatherhood of God, in the brotherhood of man, and in the dignity of human nature as the work of God, and apart from all the accessories and accidents of birth and fortune. They have wondered and admired as they have felt in turns the Poet's humour and pathos, his truthfulness and power, his manly strength and womanly tenderness, his spiritual insight and graphic description, his integrity and biting sarcasm, and his pitying heart. Even those who only know his often untranslatable words through the medium of a foreign tongue have bowed down before the might and majesty of the genius of Burns. Much more, wherever the English language is known and spoken, his poetry is a heart-prized treasure and a household joy. But Burns is especially the poet of Scotland. To appreciate him to the full, we must use neither translation nor glossary when we read. It is therefore thorough and sympathetic Scotsmen and Scotswomen who most of all feel the spell of this mighty enchanter, and enjoy the feast which he provides. To them he gives from day to day, and wherever they are, pleasure riches cannot give, and poverty cannot take away. Think of the Scottish emigrant in lonely isolation far from home. Often, as he looks at sunnier skies than his own, at fields more fertile, at seas more bright and varied in their hues than the "land of brown heath and shaggy wood," he says, "This is no' my ain plaid, bonnie though the colours be." But he takes up the poems of Burns; he reads "Tam o' Shanter," or the "Cotter's Saturday Night;" he begins to sing "Ye banks

and braes," or "Scots wha hae." And, as he reads on, his solitude is solaced, his heart is softened, the days of auld langsyne come back to him. The distance that divides him from his beloved Scotland is annihilated; he breathes again his native air, and in that hour with Burns he drinks in large and blessed draughts of refreshment, and comfort, and strength, and joy. And if the magician's spell is felt in this way far from home, what shall I say of it in Scotland itself—in Ayrshire—in the very land and home of Robert Burns? My toast is, "His immortal memory." But, gathered as we are together here, his seems more a living presence than a cherished memory. There are some men whom we can hardly reckon among the departed. They live, and move, and have their being while upon the earth—exerting influence, doing work, making their presence felt from day to day. Such a man is Robert Burns. His is more than an immortal memory among us. His is an undying life. And specially we feel his presence here. Places have spirits as well as persons; and the Ayrshire Poet is the central figure here to-day. In speaking thus admiringly and lovingly of Burns, I may be told that I am forgetting that the influence of his writings has not always been for good. Irreligion, and intemperance, and impurity have pressed some passages of his poetry into their service and dragged down their votaries by conjuring with his name. Alas! there are few whose writings have been all and always on the side of goodness. There are indeed, as we must all allow, verses in his writings that would have been better unwritten; but, while we condemn, let us remember the time in which he lived, the condition and the circumstances under which he wrote. To judge of the writings of Burns, we must not only compare those with ours—we must compare them with contemporary writings—with those that went before. And I profess to you, when I think, for instance, of some of the foul indecencies of some of our old Scottish songs—when I consider the work of Burns in substituting his own for them—I feel that, in spite of occasional stains, Scotland and Christendom are under eternal obligations to the Ayrshire Bard. There was only one way of burying the foul grossness of these old songs. That was by linking the sweet music to other and to better words. Burns did this, and thereby purified immensely the minstrelsy of Scotland. There may be still a sediment of pollution, but it is nothing to what existed before. You may remember the rather Irish couplet about our Highland roads—

Had you seen but these roads before they were made,
You would have held up your hands and bless'd General Wade.

So those of us who know what the old songs of Scotland were, may well lift up our hands and bless the name of Burns for the national boon he has given us in connexion with our Scottish minstrelsy. One word as to his life before I close. It is too true that it was not what it should or what it might have been. There was a sad difference between the ideal life he sometimes portrayed and the real life he sometimes led. It would contradict the whole tenor of his writings, it would offend the sincerity of their character, to gloss over the poet's faults, or to call his evil good. He himself has told us, in the "Bard's Epitaph," how he looked upon himself:—

The poor inhabitant below
 Was quick to learn and wise to know,
 He keenly felt the friendly glow,
 And softer flame ;
 But thoughtless follies laid him low,
 And stained his name.

Here, too, however, we can find extenuating circumstances — natural temperament, early toil in unfavourable surroundings, in rougher times than ours. It was something that he saw and admired to the end, that vision of Divine goodness which floated before his view, though he could not, at least after he reached the years of manhood, clasp it to his very heart. And surely it is for us to "gently scan our brother man." Burns says:—

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
 Decidedly can try us ;
 He knows each chord, its various tone,
 Each spring, its various bias :
 Then at the balance let's be mute,
 We never can adjust it ;
 What's done we partly may compute,
 But know not what's resisted.

In speaking thus, I have expressed, however imperfectly, the feelings of your hearts. Let us, therefore, cover with the ivy of our love the rents and defacements of that God-made temple. Let us look with wonder and admiration on the radiant light that streams forth so brightly from its windows still, on us and on the world. Let us listen with delight and thankfulness to those strains, so grand and beautiful, that issue from its shrine. We are proud of the Poet of Scotland because of his transcendent gifts, his genial nature, and his glorious work. We are not blind either to his failings on the one hand or to his good qualities on the other. With all his faults we love him still. We will cherish an admiring and affectionate

remembrance of his genius and fame to our latest breath. We will look upon his works as amongst our country's most precious treasures. To-day we rejoice to remember him, and whether we pledge this toast in water, whisky, or wine, we drink, one and all, I know, with heart and soul, to the immortal memory of Robert Burns.

Rev. R. LAWSON proposed the toast of "Carrick and its memories." No part of Scotland had produced such great men as Carrick, and the stock was by no means yet exhausted.

Mr. W. DAVIDSON, grandson of the "Souter," replied.

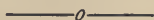
The CHAIRMAN gave "The Poet's Friends: their honoured memory."

Mr. GEORGE WILSON, in reply, gave some interesting reminiscences of Mr. Peter Hill, his grandfather, and one of the Poet's most attached friends.

Mr. A. B. TODD proposed "The living Commentators of Burns."

The other toasts were, "The Lasses of Ayrshire," proposed by Mr. William McDowall, and replied to by Lieut. Chapel; "The Custodiers of the Tombstone," by Mr. D. Murray, replied to by Rev. Mr. Findlay; "The Architect and Sculptor," by the Chairman, and replied to by Messrs. Henderson and Boyd; "The Contributors," by ex-Bailie Rae; and "The Chairman," by Dr. Gray. Mrs. Murray sang very sweetly some of the Poet's most popular songs, accompanying herself on the guitar. The proceedings terminated by the company joining in "Auld Lang Syne."

APPENDIX IV.



THE RESTORED TOMBSTONES OF THE POET'S ANCESTORS AT GLENBERVIE.

INAUGURAL CEREMONY, 25TH JUNE 1885.

(From the Brechin Advertiser.)

ON Thursday last the solitary churchyard of Glenbervie was the scene of a ceremony which may lay claim to be of national interest—the unveiling of the restored tombstones of the great-grandparents and the great-granduncle of Robert Burns. The churchyard is situated on a picturesque knoll, at a finely-wooded curve of the river Bervie, and there, under the dark shadow of the Knockhill, rest the remains of the progenitors of the national Poet—shrewd, skilful husbandmen of considerable substance. The family of Burnes rented land in Kincardineshire, in the parishes of Kinneff, Arbuthnot, Dunnottar, and Glenbervie. At Glenbervie rested upon the soil two flat gravestones; one with the dates 1715 and 1719, commemorating William Burnes, tenant in Bogjorgan, great-granduncle of the Poet, and his wife, Christian Fotheringham, the other commemorating James Burnes, tenant in Brawlinmuir, and his wife, Margaret Falconer, these being the Poet's great-grandparents. Both memorial stones are considerably decorated, one with symbolic ornaments, indicating on the part of the family a consciousness of superior station. Mr. J. B. Greig, banker, Laurencekirk, himself a descendant of the Poet's "forbears," some years ago called attention in the newspapers to the dilapidated condition into which the tombstones of the Poet's ancestors had fallen. Mainly through his exertions, a committee was appointed to raise the necessary funds to restore the stones. The respected Laird of Glenbervie, Mr. Badenach Nicolson, entered heartily into the movement, and without difficulty the required amount was forthcoming.

The original supports of the monuments had long since given way, and the "frail memorials" on which the names of the deceased were recorded had lain on the ground covered with long grass. The stones have now been placed on sandstone cradles, resting on pedestals, the designs being supplied by Messrs. Hay & Henderson, architects, Edinburgh, and the plans carried out by Mr. W. Watt, mason, Laurencekirk. Round the edge of the new cradle, in which the tombstone of the former has been placed, is the inscription:—"James Burnes, tenant in Brawlinmuir, died 23rd January 1743. Margaret Falconer, his wife, died 28th December 1749. This tomb of the great-grandparents of the Poet Burns is restored by public subscription 1885." The following is the original inscription:—

MEMENTO MORI.

J.B.

17—42.

M.F.

Here under lyes the body of JAMES BURNES who was Tenant in Bralinmuir, who died ye 23 of January 1743. Aged 87 years.

Also the body of MARGARET FALCONER, his spouse, who departed this life the 28th of Dec. 1749, aged 90 years.

Although our Bodys worms destroy—our reins consumed be,
Yet in our flesh and with our eyes, shall our REDEEMER see.

Here is the grave of THOMAS BURNES, son to the above, who departed this life June ye 8 1734, aged 29 years.—Also his lawful and only daughter MARGARETT, who departed this life March ye 24th 1741, aged 8 years.

The tombstone of the Poet's great-granduncle bears very marked traces of the ravages of time, and in some parts the inscription is illegible. The following is all that can be definitely traced:—

W.B. : C.F. :

Here under lyes BURNES,
1715

I.B. : W.B. : R.B. :

. and here lyes his son IOHN BURNES, who departed the 10th
of April 17 being of age 3

The slab from which this inscription is taken is coffin-shaped, and covers the grave of William Burnes and Christian Fotheringham, the great-great-grandparents of John Burnes, author of "Thrummy Cap," and other poetical tales.

The sequestered spot in which these remains rest is worthy of a visit, not only because of its historical associations, but also on account of its beautiful surroundings. A portion of the old church occupies the centre of the burying-ground, and is now used as the burial vault of the Glenbervie family. Within the same enclosure are the tombs of some of the famous Douglas family, that of Archibald "Bell the Cat" being the most noteworthy.

Thursday being bright and clear, at the hour appointed for the unveiling of the tombstones, which were covered by a Union Jack, a large company assembled in the churchyard, among those present being—Rev. Charles Rogers, D.D., LL.D., Edinburgh; Mr. Alexander Stuart of Inchbreck; Mr. Robert Burness, Stonehaven; Mr. William Burness, Bedford; Mr. J. B. Greig, Laurencekirk; Mr. J. C. Thomson, Sheriff-Clerk-Depute, Stonehaven; Mr. John Hampton, solicitor, Stonehaven; Rev. C. C. Macdonald, Aberdeen; Dr. Maitland Moir, Aberdeen; Mr. D. H. Edwards, publisher, Brechin; Rev. William Gordon, Glenbervie; Rev. John Reith, Riccarton; and Mr. Robert Crabb, banker, Auchinblae.

The company having assembled in the churchyard, a party, who had previously lunched at Glenbervie House, arrived at three o'clock, preceded by Mrs. Nicolson, Dr. Rogers, and Mr. D. H. Edwards, carrying large wreaths of wild-flowers, which had been tastefully arranged by Mrs. Nicolson.

Mr. J. B. GREIG, secretary of the committee, presided. He said—A professional engagement has made it impossible for our Chairman, Mr. Badenach Nicolson, to be with us to-day. That engagement became known to the members too late to admit of their deferring our meeting. Mr. Nicolson has taken a keen interest in the matter, and feels much regret at the untoward event. I congratulate you on the charming weather, and offer on behalf of the committee a cordial greeting to the visitors we are pleased to see in such numbers.

Rev. W. GORDON thereafter offered up an impressive prayer.

Mr. GREIG then said—Nearly a hundred years ago Burns was in the zenith of his powers, and the world was about to realize the peerless spell of his poetry. Great and enduring as is the renown shed on Scotland by the prowess of her sons in the world of action, it pales before that derived from the lyrics of the national Bard. While most thoroughly a Scotsman and a child of the period, he sang for men of every age and country. Whether in jocund or woesome mood, the deepest throes of the

human heart find voice through his songs. The "thoughts too strong to be suppressed, too deep to be expressed," struggled to utterance. We have had untoward estimates of the man, and editors who take on them to publish much that Burns never sanctioned, bemoan his follies. Ay, friends, he was indeed human, but he did not allow his judgment to swerve and confuse right with wrong. His sins are not charged against us, and, remembering how much we owe, under heaven, to him, it were more fit that, stepping back reverently, we should draw a veil over what concerns us little and can profit us nothing. It were well stone-throwing were left to those void of offence. Burns's being no evanescent fame, we have felt that such memorials in our country as are associated with his name would be of interest to our children's children, and were deserving of our reverend care. Such glimpses as we get of the old race interest us much on their own account. They seem to have been of keen insight, sparing of speech, not easily "shot about," dour but not vengeful. To such men the tragedy of life brought many and great vicissitudes, and such natures and their traditions were a heritage of the Bard. In every life there is much of poetry and of prose; and Burns had the gift of reading the full-charged page. Can we doubt that he heard much of what his ancestors were, of their gladness, of their sorrow, of their sharp variances, of their deep affections, of their stout contentions for the cause they espoused, and of their chequered fates? You will be glad to hear that we have got sufficient money for the object we had in view. The Mearns men here and elsewhere sent cheerfully, and it may interest you to know that the Australian contingent was among the earliest to respond. Our southern friends proffered their aid also, and forced the running. Mr. Stuart of Inchbreck, proprietor of Brawlinmuir, has always shown a great interest in matters affecting Burns, and in coming from Laithers to-day, expressly to receive in name of himself and the other heritors those memorials which I am about to confide to his care, he has given fresh proof of his interest. I have every confidence, in committing these valued relics of the past to their care, that the heritors will acquit themselves worthily in their trust. In name of the subscribers, I beg to ask that you, Mr. Stuart, will accept our thanks for your past courtesy, and the charge of these tombs.

Mrs. NICOLSON then removed the Union Jack. Having received the wreaths from Dr. Rogers and Mr. Edwards, she placed one on each of the tombstones, the company meanwhile uncovering.

Mr. A. STUART then said—I am sure you will all agree with me in

expressing our great regret that an unavoidable engagement has prevented Mr. Nicolson from being present on this interesting occasion. I know that he deeply regrets having to be absent, and I confess I do so also, because his mantle has fallen on my most unworthy shoulders. There is only this fitness, that I happen to be the proprietor of the estate which cradled the race of Burns. I esteem it a high and great honour to still hold the portions of land on which they first saw the light, and I hope that the recollection of the family will never die out in this neighbourhood. Burns has a world-wide fame. It is only recently that a bust of the Poet has been erected in Westminster Abbey, and the Americans are equally jealous of our common birthright. As to the Poet I will not speak. I merely refer to his ancestors, to whom we have this day come to do honour. It is fit and proper that the tombstones of the "forbears" of a great man should not be allowed to disappear, but should be kept uninjured for future ages. As representing the heritors, I accept the guardianship of the relics which you have been pleased to restore.

Dr. ROGERS said—That Robert Burns was, in respect of his great powers, directly indebted to his ancestors, may not be affirmed. Neither may we venture to assert that he arose in a soil which had no preparation. So to speak would be to substitute for providential pre-arrangement the government of chance. As in the meadow there are spots more especially efflorescent, and which produce plants odorous and honey-laden, so from certain races, or certain combinations of races, descend those who, by their thoughts and activities, tend to renovate and ennoble. And permit me to say that I for one incline to believe in the strong influence of heredity. Like oil on water, mental power rises to the surface, and, though beclouded for generations, will emerge and assert itself. In the parish of Arbutnot, the place now called Kair was formerly known as Burnhouse, or by abbreviation Burnes, and there are similar designations in Fife and elsewhere. The appellative points to proximity to a burn or small stream. Territorial names, common everywhere, were especially so in the north-eastern counties, and it is not unreasonable to assume that when surnames were adopted the owner of the lands of Burnhouse assumed the name of his lands. Now we learn, on the authority of the late Professor Stuart of Inchbreck, that in this parish of Glenbervie persons named Burnes were tenants in 1547, when the lands of Inchbreck were transferred to the Professor's family by Sir Alexander Douglas of Glenbervie. On the 5th April 1637 John Burnes appears as chamberlain to Sir Alexander Strachan

of Thornton, when he attached his name at Edinburgh to a legal instrument granted by the Earl of Traquair, Treasurer of Scotland, to Alexander Straitoun of that ilk. On the 26th August 1659 Patrick Burness subscribes an instrument as clerk to the Presbytery of Brechin. And from the middle of the seventeenth century downwards members of the family, with their names variously spelt Burnace, Burnas, Burnes, and Burness are mentioned in the local registers as tenant-farmers in the parishes of Fordoun, Garvock, Benholm, Kinneff, Arbuthnot, and Glenbervie. That these several families were descended from the Kair or Arbuthnot stock may be reasonably assumed, while the fact that these persons acquired substance and maintained a good social status would imply that they possessed energy and intelligence. In the parish register of Arbuthnot is the following entry:—"At the Kirk of Arbuthnot, the 27th of August, 1633, the said day Robert Burnes presentit ane child to be baptizit callit Robert. Witness thereto Robert Krow in Parkhead." This Robert Krow, or Crow, after whom the child was named, seems to have derived his name from his landlord, Sir Robert Arbuthnot. And so was the Christian name of Robert introduced into the Burnes family. Robert Burnes, the child baptized at Arbuthnot in 1633, is in the register of that parish described in June 1655, when he married Elizabeth Wise, as residing at Glenbervie. As the parish registers of Glenbervie are non-existent prior to 1721, and the marriage register prior to 1747, we cannot trace the actual succession of Robert Burnes and his wife, Elizabeth Wise. But there exists a certified inventory of the 17th of July 1705, containing an account of the stock on Bogjorgan farm, in Glenbervie, and in which James Burnes is mentioned as late lessee of half the farm. He became tenant in Brawlinmuir, on the estate of Inchbreck, and there remained till his death, which, as is recorded on one of these tombstones, took place on the 23rd January 1743, when he had attained the advanced age of eighty-seven. On the same stone is commemorated his wife, Margaret Falconer, who, as the inscription bears, died on the 28th December 1749, aged ninety. In his will, drawn up on the 14th day of June 1740, he divided his movable estate among his five children, conjoining with his statement of bequests the injunction that his children should "be careful of and dutiful to their mother," and "be at peace and unity among themselves." His eldest son, Robert, mentioned as such in the will, rented first the farm of Kinmonth in Glenbervie, and afterwards the farm of Clochnahill in the parish of Dunnottar. At Clochnahill he built a school, and aided in

supporting a teacher. By his wife, Isabella Keith, of the family of Keith of Craig, he had, along with six daughters, four sons, of whom William, the third son, was, according to the family Bible, born at Clochnahill on the 11th November 1727. His migration from these scenes led to his settlement in Ayrshire, and his there marrying a woman of Celtic stock, by whom he became the father of our great minstrel. Robert Burns has been described as a peasant. He was so inasmuch as his father cultivated his own farm, and by his own hands reared the mud cottage in which he first saw the light. But this connexion with the lowest grade was purely incidental, for he was, as these stones testify, sprung from a race of substantial yeomen, and more remotely, as would appear, from the lairds of Burnhouse. Now, when some two years ago, on an occasion similar to the present, I had occasion to look into the Poet's pedigree on the maternal side, I succeeded in tracing his forefathers for at least one hundred and twenty years as substantial yeomen on the Carrick coast. Not only so, but his mother's family, the Brouns, and those with whom they intermarried, proved to be persons of prominence among the middle-class gentry of the west. Burns's maternal ancestors were Celts, and within half a century of his birth spoke Gaelic. Now it is historically certain that the county of Kincardine was peopled by Scandinavians, and it may be questioned whether one of the Poet's paternal stock was of the Celtic race. The union of the two races of Saxon and Celt in his house first occurred by the marriage of William Burnes and Agnes Broun—a union of which the first issue appeared on the 25th January 1759, when the great minstrel was born. Might we not poetically say that in that birth was provided the keystone of an arch, of which one pillar rested on the rocks of Carrick and the other on the wild, rough shores of Bervie and Dunnottar? From under that gigantic archway have passed and are passing to every portion of the globe those who have had their energies fostered or promoted and strengthened through the songs and poetry of Burns. It was remarked of our Poet by Hugh Miller, that he was the first who taught his countrymen to look up. Whether such is the fact I will not say, but he has certainly shown that no man, if he honestly fulfils his duties and is faithful to his God, has any cause to look into the dust or bow his head in shame. Better than any philosopher, or moralist, or essayist, or orator, or any other poet, has taught the descendant of the Brawlinmuir yeoman that the jewel of honour may not be obscured by the meanness of its setting, nor manliness defaced by lack of goods. Poverty, he set forth, has its privileges, adversity its

compensation, and he only is a slave who holds indigence as a disgrace. Not in any age nor in any language have the sentiments of uninspired man taken nobler form than in these lines :—

Is there for honest poverty
That hangs his head, an' a' that ;
The coward slave—we pass him by,
We'dare be poor for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure an' a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

In the view of the Brawlinmuir yeoman's descendant, a man is dignified only by wisdom, ennobled only by virtue, while the clothing that is supplied by the industry of the wearer is more truly adorning than upon the shoulders of the indolent is a robe of the richest texture. The man of independent mind, taught Burns, might dare to be poor ; his inheritance was a nobleness of nature which rank could not confer, nor adverse fortune eradicate. In all that concerns humanity in its loftiest aspect, what lines are more elevating than these two ?—

Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
An honest man's the noblest work of God.

Do we not well, then, to testify our veneration for the ancestors of that great Bard, who finding in decay the patriotic memories, brought them forth anew, giving them strength and force in his own imperishable minstrelsy. In the words of Thomas Campbell—

What patriot pride he taught ! how much
To weigh the inborn worth of man ;
And rustic life and poverty
Grew beautiful beneath his touch.

Is there any one who is prepared to assert that Burns would have been the patriotic poet he was had he not derived his being from a race who, familiar with the scenes and ways of Caledonia, transmitted to their descendant, by precept and example, as well as by an inherent tendency, the love of country and of kind ? Genius, meteoric and underived, is in its direction under the guidance of example and of heredity. As by the late Lord Crawford it is asserted that all of the family name of Lindsay are incapable of dishonouring it, so may we assert of the ancestors of Robert Burns, that each was true.

Of their own concerns had they been careful only,—that is, had they been of the selfish school,—more gear they had left to him who whistled at the plough, but might we then have had from his pen those expressions of benevolence, combined with the hope of the coming time

When man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be?

For a course of ages had poets and others been seeking to realize what constituted the chief good. The great-grandson of the tenant at Brawlinmuir has expressed it thus:—

To make a happy fireside clime
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.

When the Poet, in the autumn of 1787, made his northern tour, he included in it Stonehaven and Laurencekirk, but it is doubtful whether he visited Glenbervie. To him there would not have been much pleasure in contemplating what he had lost, and it is even possible that his sagacious father may have withheld from his eldest son that knowledge which might have awakened his discontent. Yet surely it becomes us, and all who cherish the memory of his genius, to regard as especially sacred one spot—that under the shadow of the Knockhill, where, by one of the gentlest of Scotland's streams, rests in the kirkyard of Glenbervie the dust of his ancestors. Burns, although he had in his time many troubles and trials, was not left unnoticed. He was not overlooked by many eminent literary admirers, and one of those who, on his arrival in Edinburgh, first took him by the hand was the celebrated Lord Monboddo. We have a lineal descendant of Lord Monboddo here to-day in the person of Mrs. Nicolson, who has so suitably placed these wreaths on the tombstones of the Poet's ancestors. Most appropriately indeed is that lady present on this interesting occasion, so as publicly to evince that she is possessed of the same spirit that actuated her progenitor in doing honour to one so worthy of it, and who has cast an enduring lustre upon his country, and made Scotland celebrated throughout the earth.

Dr. MAITLAND MOIR, President of the Aberdeen Burns' Club, after referring to the feelings which inspired him on entering the churchyard of Glenbervie for the first time, said that Shakespeare, Goethe, and Burns had been the three greatest lights we had had in literature. It was, however,

the simple impulse of his nature that had inspired Burns to write. He was sure that our national Bard would have been proud had he seen such beautiful wreaths placed on the tombstones of his ancestors. The Doctor then referred to the researches of Mr. Thomson, Stonehaven, in regard to the ancestors of Burns, referring particularly to his having hunted up the Will of James Burnes of Brawlinmuir, dated in 1740. He was very proud to be allowed to be present, and to add a single remark in tribute to the memory of their national Poet.

Mr. THOMSON then exhibited the Will referred to by Dr. Moir.

Mr. STUART said he had to exhibit another interesting document—namely, the tack of David Burnes of Brawlinmuir, dated 1788. A number of other leases granted by his ancestors to the Burnes family he would gladly have shown to those present, but unfortunately he had lent them to an admirer of Burns, who had forgotten to return them.

Rev. C. C. MACDONALD said that he had been asked to propose a vote of thanks to the committee who had made the necessary arrangements for carrying out the restoration of the stones. The services of the committee would be recognised not only throughout Scotland, but throughout the whole world.

Mr. GREIG said he thought it was due to associate with that vote the name of their friend Dr. Rogers. It was only right that the people in the district should have acted as they had done, but the Doctor was one on whom they had not the same claim.

Dr. ROGERS said that his share of the duties had been small, and that the burden had rested on Mr. Greig's shoulders. He took a great interest in such work as the present, but this was positively the last he should engage in—he had finished his monumental labours in the kirkyard of Glenbervie. He was glad they had with them members of the Poet's lineage in the person of the chairman (Mr. Greig) and Mr. Robert Burnes, Stonehaven. He would add that he had spent the early part of the day, and visited several places of great historic interest, along with a gentleman now present, who had done more than any one in the past, or in recent times, to popularize and make known the poets and poetry of Scotland. He referred to Mr. D. H. Edwards of Brechin, to whose excellent literary taste and indomitable research Scotland lay under a debt of gratitude. Dr. Rogers concluded by thanking them heartily for the honour they had done him.

Mr. GREIG said that he felt it necessary to explain that there were not a few members of the Poet's lineage present with them, and he did not

wish that those who were not aware of the fact should go away under any misapprehension. He saw perhaps half a dozen gentlemen and a good many ladies who could claim kin to the illustrious bard.

Rev. Mr. REITH (a great-grandson of David Burnes) proposed a vote of thanks to the chairman, in recognition of the able manner in which he had carried out the arrangements.

Several others having spoken briefly, the Auchinblae Volunteer Band, which was in attendance immediately outside the wall of the churchyard, struck up "Auld Langsyne," followed by other appropriate airs at intervals, including "Rantin' Robin," "A man's a man for a' that," "Scots wha hae," etc. On the invitation of Mrs. Nicolson, many of the company visited the beautiful enclosures of Glenbervie.

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